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GOOD-BYE OLD YEAR!

BY LOUEY JACKSON.

A pause in the dance—what is it they say,
With a careless laugh, as they glide away
Without a regret or a passing sigh?
"Good-bye, Old Year—good-bye—good-bye!"

But mine eyes are wet with a tear-drop bright;
The music grows faint—I am tired to-night,
And sad is my heart, as I softly cry,
"Alas, Old Year, good-bye—good-bye!

"You have brought me smiles, you have brought me tears,
And a burden of joyous hopes and fears;
So sweet you have been, and so swift to die—
Happy Old Year, good-bye—good-bye!

"Though merry and blithe may the New Year be
It ne'er can bring back, save in memory,
The love that you gave ere your death drew nigh.
Happy Old Year, good-bye—good-bye!"

From the Dead Past.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SCRUB," "A BITTER CUP," "LOVER AND LORD," "THE WYCHFIELD HORROR," "A SILVER WEDDING," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"ROSALIE! Where are you, Rosalie?" The clear voice goes ringing through the hall and up the stairs. Rosalie Hurst hears it perfectly, and knows, by its eager tone, that her sister wishes to see her for some special reason; but she does not answer, or even turn her head from the open window at which she is sitting.

"Why should I?" she thinks, with her accustomed languid scorn for other people's wishes and desires. "Beatrix cannot have anything of real importance to communicate, or, if by a miracle she should have, she can easily bring it up here."

Beatrix has just come back from an afternoon of tennis and talk at the Parsonage, and on such occasions she is always irritatingly interested in all she has seen and heard, and irritatingly determined that others shall be interested too. It is not absolutely delightful to Rosalie to sit and stare for hours over the old-fashioned kitchen-garden into the soft purple haze of the summer dusk; but it is at any rate a more congenial occupation than listening to a rechauffe of village gossip, with Trix's excited comments thereon. It is all very well for Beatrix, with her absolute lack of ambition and serene content with her placid present, to care whether John Stokes has beaten his wife at longer or shorter intervals than usual—whether Susan this and Fanny that have or have not been decorous in the matter of crimped fringes, feathers and ribbons—whether there really is anything beyond flirtation in the constant meetings and long confidential talks between Claude Grey, the good-looking young curate of Wilminster, and pretty Mary Blaine.

These and kindred matters may be and are subjects of absorbing interest to hearty, whole-souled, unromantic Trix; but they only weary and disgust her beautiful widowed sister, when they do not jar upon and enrage her by presenting some sharp and vivid contrast to her own spoiled life.

"A spoiled life!" That is what Rosalie calls hers. She never even with her affectionate sister discusses the one dark chapter which she would so gladly tear from the book of her fate; but she reads and re-reads the stained and blotted pages incessantly, and ponders, with ever-growing sullen resentment, the story they tell. Resentment always, never remorse, though, as a matter of fact, she has her own vanity, ambition, and headstrong folly to blame for all that has befallen her. She, and not fate, has laid waste all the promise of her life.

"Rosalie! Oh, here you are, Rose! Why, I have been searching for you all over the garden and in every corner of the house!"

And Beatrix Massey lets the door she has noisily opened close behind her with a slam, as she comes up to the window where her sister sits, and shows all her large, even, white teeth in the self-approving smile of a person who has done a consciously clever thing.

Rosalie gives a little quiver, and regards her complacent companion with intense disfavor, as she says in her iciest tone—

"My own room being, of course, the last place in which I was likely to be found! I wonder when you will cease to be a big blundering schoolgirl, Beatrix!"

Beatrix Massey laughs outright at this, and, though Rosalie winces again as though the hearty sound annoyed her, an unprejudiced listener might think it pleasant enough to hear those fresh and ringing notes—might think it pleasant enough to watch the comic grimace with which the girl submits to her imperious elder's rebuke.

"Schoolgirl" Trix Massey is not by any means, but a fine, healthy young woman of three-and-twenty, who looks every day of her age and every stone of her weight, but who, retains so many girlish tastes and fancies, so fresh an appetite for innocent enjoyments and pleasures that Mrs. Hurst thinks babyish in their simplicity, that she feels comically incapable of defending herself from her sister's oft-repeated charge.

"'Big and blundering' I am, Rose," she says, with most perfect good temper—"that—the stature at least—is nature's fault, not mine; and, for the rest, I shall sober down no doubt some day; but we have been having such a romp with the school-children at the Rectory that I do feel extra juvenile to-night. You should have come; it was such a jolly afternoon!"

"I am not fond of jolly afternoons," Rose returns, with a slighting coldness that is emphasized by a disdainful curve of her short upper lip; "but there is no need to tell me you enjoyed yourself—the lace is torn from your skirt, your sleeve is in ribbons. Oh, no doubt you have had what your friend Mr. Clayden calls 'a high old time'!"

"I am a trifle dilapidated," Beatrix agrees, glancing rather ruefully at the pretty white frock, from which a long frill of thick soft lace has been ruthlessly ripped; "but there is no real damage done—a needle and thread will soon put all things straight; but don't be sarcastic and disagreeable, Rosalie, or I will not tell you my news."

Rosalie slightly shrugs her slender shoulders.

"My loss will be great, no doubt. Wilminster gossip is of absorbing interest to me."

"Ah, but this is not gossip; it is real news—news that concerns me, and so, in a fashion, you also!"

Rosalie Hurst raises her dark violet eyes to her sister's face with something more nearly approaching interest. Even now there is nothing like eagerness in her look or tone; but it is with at least a distinctly marked curiosity that she says—

"I suppose Mr. Clayden has declared himself at last, and you have come for my congratulations."

"Good gracious, no!" Trix interrupts vehemently and with a fine blush. "You should not say such wild things, Rosalie. Mr. Clayden walked home with me, and was as kind and friendly as he always is. He knows how fond I am of children, and he likes to talk about his own; but the poor man is a widower."

"And may the widowed never mate again?" Rosalie asks, with a smile, and in in a tone of such exceeding bitterness that Beatrix looks at her with widening eyes, inwardly wondering of what piece of supreme stupidity she has been guilty now.

"Of course! I did not mean that, Rose!" she cries, not mending matters much as she attempts to explain. "When one is young and very beautiful, when there have been great trouble and unhappiness; but poor Mrs. Clayden was——"

"A sickly and complaining invalid who taxed her husband's patience to its extreme limit, by all accounts," Rosalie says, relapsing into her old tone of chill indifference. "Don't talk romantic nonsense, Beatrix; it does not suit your style; and I never see the good of glorifying people who are essentially commonplace."

"Commonplace!" Beatrix echoes, an angry color glowing all over her fresh face, her brown eyes sparkling with a rather threatening light. "If it is commonplace to be brave and patient and affectionate—to be a kind husband and father——"

"Well, on the whole I think it is," Mrs. Hurst says, with curious quietness. "And, if you were a philosopher instead of a frantic partisan, Trix, you would rejoice to know that such virtues were not a peculiar attribute of your idol."

"My idol! I wish you would not speak so of Mr. Clayden, Rosalie!"

"I will not speak of him at all—that is easily managed. You introduced his name, and I simply said what I knew to be the fact—what indeed he has made perfectly clear to all the gossips of the place that, having mourned his sickly saint for three good years, Mr. Charles Clayden is exceedingly anxious to instal a healthy and high-spirited successor in her place."

Trix feels the indignant blood tingle to her very ear-tips as she listens to words that seem nothing less than brutal to her shy consciousness. Her sister's speech hurts her more than she cares to show; but she does not openly resent it, knowing by long experience how useless it is to try to argue with Rosalie in one of her more cynical moods—the moods for which the younger girl is wont to make tender allowance, for she in all sincerity endorses the fiction that Rosalie's life has been blighted and spoiled, and honestly believes that much must be borne by those around her from one who has had so much to bear.

The sisters are in all ways utterly unlike, and invariably succeed in puzzling strangers as to their relative positions. In the first place, Rosalie, small, slender, and delicately beautiful, is always at first sight taken for the younger of the two, though she is really the elder by eight years; and, in the next place, her leadership is so pronounced, her tone of command so absolute, that every one takes it for granted that such small fortune as the two girls possess belongs to the widow, Mrs. Hurst, whereas, as a matter of fact, the snug little house and small, but sufficient income are both the property of Beatrix, Rosalie not owning one penny of her own.

The fact of Rosalie's being penniless seems of small importance to the younger sister; but the other broods over and resents it with ever-growing bitterness of heart. It is part of the old blight, the old wrong, the old shame that clings to and spoils her life. If she had not made that one false step, her aunt would never have been so cruelly unjust; she would have escaped the indignity, the humiliation of being a dependant upon Trix—she, with her physical and mental gifts, her grace and charm and power of fascination—she, who thought once that she had a world at her small feet—she, housed, fed, clad by the young sister she had regarded with contemptuous tolerance, and hastily hoped by dint of severe training to make presentable some day! She never for one moment thinks of the simple unconscious generosity with which Beatrix has given her half of—nay, more than half—of all her possessions. She has refused nothing, but taken all with grudging bitterness, and almost hated her sister for having the power to bestow.

"If aunt Caroline had had any sense of duty, she would have shared all between her brother's children," she said coldly, when Trix, with a mistaken idea that her sister's pride would prevent her from taking as a gift what she considered hers by right, was affectionately dwelling upon the pleasure it would give her to make a home for them both. "I do not blame you, Trix. You could not help being conciliatory and gaining great influence over a feeble-minded old woman, but of course you know as well as I do that this will is iniquitous."

Trix was too honest to endorse this statement—too affectionate to hear without protest this abuse of the kind old woman she mourned with most unaffected sorrow; but she made due allowance for her sister's exasperated feelings, and only urged in a conciliatory tone—

"Of course I know we were the same relations, Rosalie; but aunt Cary was so fond of me. You see I was always with her, before she was ill, while I was a little schoolgirl, and while you——"

"While I was thrust out into the world to fight the battle of existence, to run all risks, to come to cruel grief," Rosalie finished, in a hard resentful tone. "You need not remind me of the difference in our fortunes, Beatrix. All the rain and sunshine for you; for me only storm and shipwreck and beggary."

Beatrix might have told her sister that whatever her troubles and losses were she had brought them all upon herself. Their aunt had been not only willing, but eager, to extend the shelter of her home to both her orphan nieces, and Trix could well remember when brilliant beautiful Rosalie had held by far the higher place in Mrs. Treverton's regards, but the dull quiet life had not suited Rosalie's restless ambition.

She had fretted and fumed, grown discontented and unamiable, and finally flight—whither for many a long day no one knew or guessed. All these and many more things of like import Trix might have said, but she did not even think them. So long as Rosalie consented to share all things, and not abuse "aunt Cary's" memory too much, she was content; and, as Rosalie subscribed with more or less graciousness to these conditions, the sisters soon settled down to the placid life which perfectly suited the tastes of one, and which the other endured as best she might, for a while, and for a reason of her own.

But they have been three years at Wilminster now, and Rosalie Hurst begins to wax impatient at the leaden dulness of the small country place. She has lived so long in the shadow, surely she may venture back into the sunlight now, emerge from the chrysalis stage and flutter, a butterfly, once more. The thought has tormented her for weeks, and it makes her fret more angrily than ever the remembrance that

Beatrix is mistress of the situation, not she. If they leave Wilminster, Beatrix must give the order to quit, and Beatrix, ordinarily so good-naturedly yielding, is, she fears, likely to prove obstinate and, as she calls it, selfish here.

"She always had a fondness for the wretched, poky, little place," Rosalie thinks, when she turns the pros and cons of the matter over in her mind and considers the forces she has to fight; "but, now she has taken up with that wretched Charles Clayden and his brood of brats, of course she considers it an earthly Paradise, and it will take all my power over her to drag her away. It is so like Beatrix"—her lip curves with irrepressible scorn at the idea—"independent, and wealthy even, as she is, for a girl with her tastes to incline to such an ineligible suitor. If she were a poor struggling governess I could understand her taking the step-mother's place, but as it is—— Bah! I feel really benevolent when I think of the fate from which I shall save her by leaving Wilminster just now; for leave it I must, and consequently, Trix, my dear, leave it you shall. The only question is, how shall I open operations and where shall we go?"

The thought over which Rosalie has been brooding still possesses her when Trix speaks of Charles Clayden, and, as she refers to her sister's suitor—for he is obviously that, though as yet an undeclared one—in slighting and contemptuous terms, she thinks the time has come for at least inserting the thin end of the wedge.

"Don't look so scared and hurt and altogether reproachful, Trix," she cries, with an unusual show of amiability; and how tenderly caressing the soft tones, how pleadingly affectionate the dusky luminous eyes can be when it suits Rosalie to conciliate those about her, Trix Massey knows to her cost.

A vague fear comes to her now that her sister must intend to make some unusually exorbitant demand when she stoops to conquer like this. But, though her fear is well founded, she does not guess how exorbitant the demand will be. She smiles feebly, and listens with a little expectant flutter at her heart, while Mrs. Hurst goes calmly on.

"I hope I did not hurt your feelings, dear. I should not, I know, have spoken treason of aunt Cary or ridiculed your friends, but I am growing a very unamiable person, I fear."

Trix opens her eyes wide in innocent amazement. Matters are becoming desperate when Rose voluntarily enters the confessional and owns to any sort of sin.

"Growing unamiable?" Even Trix's loyal affection has never persuaded her that Rosalie was amiable before. She has been content to accept her chronic discontent and petulant sharpness as part of the natural state of things, the consequence of her crushing grief.

"Unamiable—oh, I don't know!" she answers vaguely; but Rosalie interrupts her in the same pleasant playful tone.

"Ah, but I am! And you must not suppose, because I ruthlessly indulge my vile temper—often, poor dear, at your expense—that I do not know and repent my sin. I do at times suffer real agonies of remorse when I think of all you have done and borne for me, and how very ill I have repaid you——"

"Rosalie!"

"Beatrix?" Rosalie mimics her sister's hurt indignant tone of protest, and looks at the girl in a fashion that would almost make a bystander believe she really loved Beatrix. "Let me finish, please. This is one of my good hours; I am in a confessing and atoning mood. I want to tell you that my heart is right; it is only my nerves and temper that have gone wrong. You may not have noticed much change in me, Trix, but my health is failing fast. I am convinced that this morbid seclusion is killing me."

"Poor darling Rose, I always said and thought it must be bad!" Trix cries. "I am so glad you have come to see it in the same light yourself, and you will go out more now, and take more interest in things. How pleased all the Rectory people will be—all Wilminster indeed!"

"Don't, Trix," Rosalie interrupts, with a little shiver and an imploring look in the upraised eyes. "You don't understand me, dear. If I am to escape from myself, I must also escape from Wilminster. I hate people and place alike!"

"Hate Wilminster?" Trix echoes in the tone of a person who had just listened to some daring impiety.

"Yes, hate it!" Rosalie repeats passionately, while a curious expression lights up the violet eyes. "I shall never be better, never come out of my shell while we stay here! Oh, Trix, if you love me—and I know you do—let us leave this place!"

Trix Massey turns hot and cold, as she listens with mingled fear and indignation to her sister's eager pathetic appeal. Rosalie has made many unreasonable requests, she knows, but never one that equalled this. Leave Wilminster! Leave the dear old house, every stick and stone of which she loves—the village in which every second person is her protege or friend—the little churchyard where aunt Cary sleeps under her pretty cross of stone and the fragrant flowers she loved, the flowers Trix tends with jealous care! Leave the Rectory girls, whom she has always found so much more sisterly than Rose! Leave—but this she does not add even to herself—Charles Clayden and the motherless children, to whom, day by day, the mother's heart that beats in her girlish breast is more strongly drawn! But perhaps, after all, it is the unadmitted argument that endows her with resistant force—that gives her courage to cry in an indignant tone—

"Leave Wilminster! How could we, Rosalie? Is not this house ours?"

"Yours, you mean!" Rosalie corrects in a proud bitter tone. "No need to remind me, Beatrix; I am well aware of that fact—well aware that, to a certain extent, our going and coming must depend on you."

"I did not mean that, as you well know," Trix cries angrily. It is not difficult to rouse her, for her temper is naturally hot, though corrected by a sweet generosity and geniality. "Yours or mine, or belonging, as to all intents and purposes it does, to both of us, the house is here."

"And, like others, it can be let or sold—should be, if it were mine; but it is not, so why need we discuss the matter? Since you are rooted in Wilminster, and Wilminster means slow death to me, we must go our several ways."

"Rosalie, what do you mean?"

"Simply that we must separate, dear. I can go out once more into the world and do as I did before."

"Rosalie?"

"Oh, not that!"—there is not even a tinge of crimson color in Rosalie Hurst's cream-tinted skin, though Trix's honest face glows with a hot blush. "I am no girl, no fool now, Trix, but a woman with a spoiled past behind her, a hopeless future ahead. You may let me go with a perfect security that I——"

"But I don't want to let you go," Trix cries in a distracted tone, while the big tears rise to her eyes. "I—you have startled me so, Rosalie—of course if you cannot live at Wilminster——"

"I neither can nor will."

"Well, then, you must not go alone. No, don't thank me, please. Give me a little time; let me think."

"Very good; but the time shall not be enough to let you consult Charles Clayden, to let him oppose his influence to mine," Rosalie decides within herself, even while she says aloud in her most dulcet tones, "Of course, dear Trix, I know you will do what is kindest and best. The only cause I see for hurry is—— Well, I will tell you the whole truth since you are so good to me. I want to consult some doctor about my heart. No, I will not have you frighten yourself; there may be nothing very wrong, but, as I said before, I grow morbid in this solitude and would like my morbid fears set at rest. And now let us talk of something else."

Only a few minutes before Trix would gladly have accepted the invitation to change the subject, but now she is too stunned and taken back by the new terror which her sister has awakened within her to do anything but stare helplessly at Rosalie. It is Rosalie herself, who says, with a sweet if slightly martyr-like smile—

"Come, Trix, tell me your news. Oh, you have some, I know; you were full of it when you came in!"

"Oh, yes!" Trix's face, which has grown very pale, brightens with generous pleasure now, though she cannot keep all trace of bitterness out of her tone. "If pleased me very much; but you will not care for it, Rose, since it is only Wilminster news. You know Dolly Marsden came home yesterday?"

Rosalie nods a languidly gracious assent; she cannot help the languor when discussing any subject but herself, but graciousness is her one just now.

"And sent an urgent note requesting your presence to-day. What did she want you for, Trix—to boast of her godmother's greatness and goodness, to tell you what a pleasant visit she had had, or to stir your soul to envy by a display of her new dresses and finery? She failed if she had the last object in view, Trix, for there is no such thing as envy in your soul."

But the last sentence wins no smile from Trix.

"She showed me no dresses, and talked much less than the other girls," she says, with grave simplicity; "and I certainly did not envy her, though she is a very lucky and a very happy girl!"

"Very lucky, very happy!" Rosalie echoes, with a short ill-pleased laugh. "That means that she has come back engaged."

"Yes—she is engaged; that was my news. And I am to be one of her bridemaids, Rosalie!"

Rosalie does not answer at once; she is pondering the news with a discontented frown.

"Dolly—that chit! Why, she is five years your junior, Trix!" she says, after a while. "Pretty, no doubt, in a certain baby way, but——" There is a world of disparagement in the upraised brows. "However, I dare say it is an absurd engagement—some briefless barrister, penniless parson, or doctor whose patients are all to come. What more could the Marsdens expect?"

"Not much, I suppose; but they will certainly have more. Dolly is engaged to a handsome, wealthy young Baronet—Sir Walter Brackenbury. Rose, what is it? Are you ill, or—or mad?"

With a wild hoarse cry—"It is false, wickedly false; you know you are only saying it to torture me, Beatrix!"—Rosalie Hurst has sprung to her feet, and now stands facing her sister with deathly pale lips and eyes flaming fiendishly.

CHAPTER II.

DOROTHEA, Lady Brackenbury. How awfully grand it sounds; and Dolly Marsden has a most undignified ring! I wonder how the child will bear the transformation," Jane Marsden cries, surveying her young sister with semi-maternal thoughtfulness and a queer mixture of anxiety and pride in her kind eyes.

Jane sits at the head of the long table on which the simple evening meal is spread, Dolly at its foot, and their stations in the family are thus accurately defined. Jane is the eldest of the Rectory girls—rather an old girl she is wont to call herself, in her pleasant laughing fashion; and, in fact, she is older than her years, having been called while still a child to play the part of house-mistress and mother to six children younger than herself. There are five other girls—Eva, Maggie, Constance, Kate, and Dora—between Dolly and herself, and it seems strange to her that the youngest bird of all should be the first to leave the nest. True, she is by far the prettiest and most attractive; but still——

"I can't understand it," she says, shaking her sleek dark head as she proceeds to pour out the tea. "If it had been Constance or Maggie——"

"But it is not—worse luck for them!" cries Maggie, a tall slim girl with sparkling brown eyes and a bright irregular-featured face. "And what is more, you foolish crooning old Jennie, it was never in the least likely to be! Of course Con and I are much older and wiser. Don't frown, Con; I will drop the age and stick only to the wisdom, if you like. Of course we should have borne the Brackenbury honors with more dignity."

"I think I should leave dignity out of the question, so far at least as you are concerned, Maggie," Jane interrupts, with her quiet smile. "Con has a certain amount of stateliness; but your best friends would hardly consider that your strong point."

"One's best friends rarely understand one's real character," Maggie says loftily. "I am weak nowhere; but it is in dignity that I am really strong. Imagine me in the regulation long train, with feathers, and all decked in diamonds, to do homage to Her Majesty." She makes a burlesque curtsey as she speaks. "I should make a sensation, I am sure."

"I am sure of it too, my dear," Constance says drily. "What sort of one it would be I shall not venture to say."

"All envy, hatred, uncharitableness, and so on, Con. But I forgot; it is Dolly we have to envy, combine and conspire against, not poor unimportant me. Dolly, you little upstart wretch, what did you mean by daring to throw your elders in the shade?"

"Dolly always had all the luck," Dora, the plainest and least amiable of the Marsden girls, says rather sourly; "the best of everything—petting, visiting, and dressing—always fell to her share."

"Not to mention the best looks, the sweetest voice, and the most winning ways," Maggie finishes. "Doll, my dear, you are a domestic traitress; you have robbed your sisters of these violet eyes, that rose-leaf complexion, those twists and coils of yellow hair, and all the pretty kittenish ways that should of right belong to us. And, last and worst of all——"

"Oh, Maggie, don't be so absurd!" With a look of half-wistful, half-laughing appeal Dolly raises the dark-fringed violet eyes of which her sister speaks; and Jane says, with the queer touch of authority that her patient motherhood gives her the right to exercise over girls little younger than herself—

"Don't, Maggie! I won't have the child teased. You have had quite enough of her jokes for to-day, have you not, Dolly?"

"Well, yes," Dolly agrees, with an affectionate look at her tormentor. "Maggie has had a good cat-and-mouse game, and may choose some other pastime now. She is a kind cat, though; only pats one with velvety paws, instead of letting the claws go deep!"

"Thanks, my dear, for an original compliment. Your mouseship is safe from future pats, at any rate for the day. By the way, Jennie, why didn't Trix Massey stay to tea?"

"Rosalie was not very well, she said; but I think the real reason was that——"

"That Mr. Claydon was in a great hurry to get home, and took Trix with him."

"Well, I did not mean that, though it is possibly true. But I know she wanted to tell Dolly's news."

"No doubt," Constance agrees, with a nod. "What a warm-hearted girl Trix is—not gushing, but just the person one likes to tell good news to, feeling sure of sympathy! I am awfully fond of Trix—like her as much as I dislike that beautiful incubus of a sister, in fact."

"And so say all of us," chimes irrepressible Maggie. "Trix is a dear—not an angel—she is too solid and jolly for that, though she does bear almost angelically with Rosalie's insolent whims, but a dear, good, lovable girl. While Rosalie—well, my opinion of her had better be left an all-expressive blank."

"I wonder how Rosalie will take the news of Dolly's engagement," Kate says suddenly. "Not with Trix's honest satisfaction, I know. She despises us and all Westminster too unfeignedly and openly not to receive with extreme disgust the idea of such promotion for our baby."

"I know exactly how she will take it, what she will do," Dora puts in, with the queer satirical smile that is so frequently seen on her thin dark face. "In the first place, she will point-blank refuse to credit any story so absurd; then she will scold Trix heartily for bringing her such trivial gossip; then by slow degrees rouse herself to take some languid interest in the matter; ask all sorts of impertinent questions about Sir Walter Brackenbury, his looks, ways and means, and then——"

"And then?" It is Dolly herself who echoes the two words on which her sister pauses with somewhat malicious meaning—echoes them with a defiant ring in her clear tones, a defiant sparkle in her violet eyes. She does not see Dora's drift very plainly, but it is quite safe to take it for granted that she means to be nasty, for, since the great news ran through the Rectory, filling the other girls with pleasant excitement, Dora has consistently declined to be nice. "And then?" Dolly raises her pretty golden head with a stateliness full of promise for the future Lady Blackenbury, as Maggie remarks later. "Finish your sentence, please, Dora. When Rosalie Hurst hears of my engagement, what can she or will she do?"

Dora Marsden bestows upon her lucky younger sister an irritatingly compassionate glance, and says in tones of mock pity—

"Something you will not like, my dear. You know what Rosalie is, how conscienceless, how greedy and how very beautiful; and, being what she is, you must know that she will do her best to detach your very eligible suitor from your side."

"Don't talk such nonsense, Dora!" Maggie puts in angrily. "Why should you try to put such absurdities into Dolly's head?"

"It is not nonsense! We shall soon see who is right," Dora rejoins doggedly. "Do you remember how very nearly she succeeded in breaking off the engagement between Maggie Knox and Colonel Cameron within a week of their wedding-day?"

"I remember that she made a good deal of mischief," Maggie answers carelessly, though there is no carelessness in the swift side-glance she casts at her little sister; it seems so queer to see that proud look on Dolly's face. "I don't don't

Rosalie's wish to do harm, only her power."

"Why should you doubt that?" Dora asks, opening her sharp black eyes in would-be innocent wonder. "Her beauty is undeniable, her power of attraction is more remarkable still. It was really absurd to see Colonel Cameron struggle against the spell she seemed to cast over him. I believe he was really fond of Maggie, yet Rosalie almost made him jilt the poor girl on the altar steps."

"Almost, not quite; and a miss is as good as a mile," Kate chimes in gaily. "I agree with Maggie. You are talking an awful lot of nonsense, Dora; there is not much fun in raking up Rosalie Hurst's sins. I don't like it either, for, though I don't like her, to do it always seems treachery to Trix. As for making Dolly uncomfortable with any thoughts of rivalry——"

"I am not afraid, Kate"—Dolly's pretty face is a little pale, but, as she looks up at her champion sister, Kate, there is a very frank smile in her eyes. "Walter has seen many pretty women, and—he chose me!"

"And showed his good taste. You will make a sweet little Lady Brackenbury. Oh, dear, I shall be so glad when our future brother-in-law arrives! Of course you have slightly exaggerated his attractions; but, all allowances being made, I still expect something striking and superb. Six feet two of majestic manhood, falcon-eyed, bronzed and eagle-beaked, languid yet athletic, impassioned and sparklingly witty, yet with all these the repose of manner that 'stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.'"

Dolly laughs merrily now. The absurdity of the speech banishes, as the speaker intends that it shall banish, all uncomfortable fancies from her mind.

"Oh, Kate, how disappointed you will be if you expect such a thorough-going hero of romance! Walter is—well, I think him very good-looking, certainly"—dimpling and blushing very prettily over the magnanimous admission—"but he is only five feet nine at most, his eyes are not those of a falcon but of a very good-natured man, and his manners are much like those of other people."

Maggie raises her eyes and hands, and heaves a profound sigh of resignation.

"Very good-natured—much like other people!" she echoes plaintively. "What shocking bathos, after having our hopes raised by Kate's eloquent description. Never mind, we must make the best of a bad matter, Doll."

"Dolly, don't let them tease you any more," Miss Marsden says, with her maternal air. "Wait a minute, Dora"—seriously, as all the girls rise from the table and are leaving the room—"I want to say a few words to you while we are alone. It is not right or kind to tease Dolly as you do!"

A sullen look clouds Dora's face. She seems about to make some contemptuously impatient answer; but the habit of obedience is still strong, and, though she draws her black brows together and bites her thin underlip, she only says a little sullenly—

"Engaged girls expect that sort of thing, and must put up with it. We all tease her, do we not?"

"Ah, but in a different fashion! Kate and Constance and Maggie only make ridiculous jokes, while you——"

"While I—— What do I do, Jane? Let me hear my crime."

Jane Marsden looks, as she feels, both shocked and pained by the hard mocking answer. Dora from her childhood has given more trouble than all the girls put together; is filling her mind with grave anxiety now; and with Dora alone is she afraid to administer a deserved rebuke.

"Don't use such words, Dora!" she says, with a smiling nervous look into her sister's unsmiling eyes. "I only want to give you a word of warning, dear. It is possible that you meant not to be really unkind or to spoil your little sister's happiness; but what you said about Rosalie Hurst—the threat you held out—when you come to think of it, dear, you must admit that was not in good taste."

Dora shrugs her shoulders and laughs, not very pleasantly.

"In good taste or bad, my words were words of warning, and the warning was at least as much needed as yours is now. Listen, Jane"—there is a queer convincing ring in Dora's tone, her black eyes have a wicked glitter of satisfaction in them, or so Jane Marsden thinks—"I do not speak only from what we all know of Rosalie—her ambition, greed of conquest, and general unscrupulousness—but I have the rearest strangest presentiment that she will make mischief between Sir Walter Brackenbury and Dolly, even if she does not succeed in carrying him off altogether."

Jane Marsden grows both angry and uncomfortable; there is such placid conviction in her sister's manner that she feels half convinced herself that the girl has some foundation for what she says.

"Presentiment—that is all nonsense, Dora!" she cries with unwonted sharpness. "You are simply trying to make us all uncomfortable by saying disagreeable things. It is not as though you were a superstitious person."

"No, I am not superstitious, Jane. So, you see, my strong presentiment impresses me the more. I have dreamed two nights running of Sir Walter and Rosalie."

"If you dreamed of them for twenty nights you might keep your dreams to yourself, and not make Dolly unhappy. Nothing is more unlikely than that she and Rosalie should be rivals, and if they were——"

"Rosalie Hurst would be a dangerous rival for any woman."

"But hardly for a young innocent girl like Dolly. Rosalie, handsome as she undoubtedly is, has passed I might almost say her second youth; she is at least as old as I am."

"She may be, but she does not look five-and-twenty. Every one thinks her younger than your favorite, Trix, and when she chooses to exert her power of fascination—well, even you, prejudiced as you are, admit that you find her irresistible."

"Yes, she can be very attractive." The troubled look depends in Miss Marsden's candid eyes, yet she still says stoutly. "Nevertheless, I have no fear, Dora. The man who has had the good sense and good taste to love Dolly will not be dazzled by Rosalie Hurst."

Dora shrugs her shoulders.

"Very well, we shall see," she says curtly. "Walter arrives on Wednesday, does he not?"

"On Wednesday—yes!"

"Well, on Thursday or Friday at the very latest Rosalie will electrify Trix—who will no more put cause and effect together than you would do unassisted, Jennie—with the announcement that she is tired of her long seclusion, and feels sociably inclined. Will Trix make a call or so with her, beginning, say, at the Rectory? Trix will fall headlong into the trap, hail the proposal with rapture, appear triumphantly among us with her sister, and then——"

"And then?" Jane cries involuntarily, and in a tone almost of appeal.

Dora laughs again.

"Why, then, the characters being assembled on the stage, the tragi-comedy will begin. How it will end neither you nor I can tell, so it is useless to discuss that matter any more."

CHAPTER III.

FLUSHED, smiling, breathless with pleasure, Dolly Marsden surveys herself in her pretty lace-draped mirror with an anxiety at which she herself is inclined to laugh, as she hears her lover's voice and step in the square hall below. It is an hour of supreme joy to her, and yet it is a trying one too. She has run away to prepare for it in the safe solitude of her own room.

"If the first twenty minutes were over I should not mind, or if I were quite sure I should not make the girls laugh. They must like Walter, and they will all be friends with him soon; but I wonder if I look very nice to-day. I wish my cheeks were not so ridiculously red. I don't want to look like a shy schoolgirl, for, of course, as Dora says, he will look for some show of dignity now. Oh, here she is!"

But, to Dolly's intense relief, it is not Dora, but Maggie, who comes dancing in, her always bright dark face beaming with pleasurable excitement now.

"Dolly, what do you mean by hiding yourself away, you wicked lucky girl? Yes, lucky," she repeats emphatically, seizing the girl by both shoulders and giving her a hearty shake, for which she makes instant amends by a still more hearty kiss. "I did not really understand the extent of your good fortune till to-day. Walter is down-stairs; we have all fallen in love with him at once. What do you say to that, and what do you mean, you audacious small person, by becoming the sole proprietor of such an altogether charming young man?"

Dolly tries to laugh, but the feeling that her sister's words and her own thoughts evoke is too deep to be played with. The violet eyes are misty, and the pretty voice quavers as she says—

"I don't understand why so much should be given to me, Maggie—why Walter should care for me."

"Don't you, indeed, Miss Modesty?" Maggie cries, with a merry ringing laugh. "The matter is pretty plain then to the rest of the world; and, whatever you yourself may think, Walter Brackenbury is an uncommonly-lucky man. No, don't shake that, curly head, Miss Doll; I won't have it. Compliments are out of place between sisters, and I shall not pay you any; but just look again at that glass—you were studying it attentively when I came in—and tell me whether it does not reflect a rather lovely little girl."

Reluctantly, blushing even more than before, Dolly turns and looks at herself in the glass.

"Well," Maggie cries, with mock anxiety, "I am waiting for the verdict still! 'Dost thou like the picture?'"

"Yes, in a way," Dolly admits, with a queer little grimace. "I am pretty; but, as Dora says, I am not dignified."

"Oh, bother Dora!" says Maggie, with contempt. "Would she not like to change with you in everything? Should we not all like to do it, for the matter of that? And now come down-stairs like a good child. It was an unheard-of thing for you not to welcome Walter here."

Slipping her hand within her sister's arm, Maggie leads her down the shallow well-polished oaken steps and to the door of the pretty old-fashioned drawing-room, from which there comes the sound of many merry voices.

"You see your young man has made himself quite at home without your assistance, Doll," Maggie whispers mischievously; then she drops Dolly's arm, and, entering the room a little before her, says in her clear ringing voice, "Allow me to introduce you to another sister, Miss Dorothy Marsden, Sir Walter Brackenbury!"

The young man who stands on the hearth-rug, talking to Mr. Marsden and Jane, turns a very bright, bronzed face quickly round, and the look that comes into the keen brown eyes as they rest on the pretty blushing girl satisfies shrewd Maggie at once and for ever as to the truth and fervor of the love her little sister has won.

"I like him," she says to Constance, even more emphatically than she has said the same thing to herself, as the two girls exchange impressions later on in the day. "He is lively and amusing and very good-looking, and, more than that, he looks good. Don't you think so, Con?"

"Oh, yes!" Constance agrees cheerfully. "No doubt about it! He is a paragon, and Dolly is the luckiest of lucky girls. What do you say, Dora?" she asks a little maliciously, as that young lady comes up with a very discontented expression and throws herself back in a big lounging-chair. "Is not our baby an enviable person?"

"I do not understand," Dora answers disagreeably. Whereat the two other girls laugh; and she adds, in a decidedly exasperated tone, "If you mean, as I suppose you do, is not Dolly a very lucky person to have secured a wealthy husband who is not ugly, not old, not unpresentable in any way, I of course say yes. But other girls have done the same thing, and I see no need to lose our wits over the matter. I verily believe I am the only same person in the Rectory to-night!"

"Then I prefer a little madness!" Maggie cries with irrepressible disgust. "I do really think you are jealous, Dora! Luckily you cannot spoil the child's happiness, or I really believe you would."

"Thanks for your good opinion!" Dora drawls, with a flash of her small black eyes and a mocking curve of her thin lips. "Whatever intentions you credit me with, I shall certainly neither make nor mar Dolly's bliss; but, unless I mistake greatly, we shall have some of her rose-leaves crumpled soon."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE Bishop of Wakefield, England, wittily divides the modern sermon under the following seven heads: "1. 'The Sesquipedalian;' big words hiding little thoughts. 2. 'The Wishy-Washy;' no explanation required. 3. 'The Pyrotechnic;' blazing with brilliant metaphors and illustrations, and finishing with a faint odor of gun-powder. 4 'The Anecdotic;' teeming with stories—some of them good enough once, but gone bad by keeping. 5. 'The Flowery;' in which rhyme is of more importance than reason. 6. 'The Mellifluous;' with calm, unbroken flow. 7. 'The Paregoric;' against which the powers of wakefulness fail; like a roll of ribbon, so much alike at all points that a yard can be cut off anywhere."

Bric-a-Brac.

THE SKOPTZI.—The St. Petersburg correspondent of the Standard tells this story: "A banker and his niece, who are members of a religious sect called the Skoptzi, or self-mutilators, were sentenced recently to fifteen and ten years' imprisonment respectively. The banker tattooed a cross on his niece's breast, and mutilated himself. Mutilation is a penal offense in Russia only when it is prompted by religious motives.

LONDON STREETS.—Bond-street was named after Thomas Bond. Paternoster-row is said to be so-named from the turners of rosaries, or Pater Nosters, who formerly dwelt there. It has also been noted as the locality of stationers, printers, and booksellers. Cheapside, a celebrated street and crowded thoroughfare in London, is named from the Saxon word Chepe, or market. Addison in referring to it says, "The inhabitants of St. James', notwithstanding they live under the same laws and speak the same language, are a distinct people from those of Cheapside."

THE TWELVE GOOD RULES.—In his poem entitled "The Deserted Village," Goldsmith describes the old inn on whose parlor-walls there hung, besides other things, "the twelve good rules." It seems that these rules were drawn up by King Charles I., and as they are never displayed nowadays it may be interesting to state what they were. Here is the list:—1. Urge [drink] no health. 2. Profane no divine ordinances. 3. Touch no State matter. 4. Reveal no secrets. 5. Pick no quarrels. 6. Make no comparisons. 7. Maintain no ill opinions. 8. Keep no bad company. 9. Encourage no vice. 10. Make no long meals. 11. Repeat no grievance. 12. Lay no wagers.

THE FASTEST SWIMMERS IN THE WORLD.—The fastest swimmers in the world are, of course, dwellers in the vasty deep, but they are not fishes for all that. They belong to the dolphin family, which includes, besides other interesting creatures, the porpoise, the true dolphin, and the fierce killer whale, or orca—this last-named animal being so cruel, and so speedy withal, that it is looked upon by the inmates of the sea as the scourge of the ocean. The rate at which the dolphins travel is over twenty miles an hour, and they have been seen to keep on swimming around and around a steamer which was going at its quickest. But the orca can overtake even its cousin, the true dolphin.

THEY CANNOT MAKE FIRE.—The human race has vastly improved on the method of kindling a fire that was in vogue when wild in woods the noble savage ran. And still as then no one of the lower animals is able of itself to strike a light. This is said to be one of the signs that separates man from the beasts that perish—at least the test is accepted by a large number of persons. Yet though animals cannot make a fire, they are very fond of it when it has been made. Pussy will lie on the hearth for hours, and apes have helped many a baker and cook look after ovens and furnaces. Since to natives of tropical countries heat is not a necessity, it has been held that some races, like the Dokos of Abyssinia and the Minoopies and certain of the South Sea Islanders, were once without knowledge of the means of producing fire.

SIDE BY SIDE.—Tangier, a much-visited town in Morocco opposite to Gibraltar, contains two prisons. They stand side by side, but one is for the use of town criminals, the other being reserved for the rogues of the country. It is very odd that the latter has three times as many inmates as the former in spite of the fact that brigands of the hills take the place of the thieves of the town. In England there is far more crime in towns than in the country, and this only shows that though it is so near to Europe, Morocco as a whole is not very civilised. When prisoners are unruly in Tangier they are always reduced to order and obedience by starvation. No food whatever is allowed them. Some men in their stubbornness will hold out for days, and a few have even starved to death. Such a plan for treating obstinate prisoners would not be permitted in more enlightened countries.

AN OLD couple calling themselves Mr. and Mrs. Louis Muller, who looked to be about 70 years of age, but who claimed to be 53, applied at the City Hall, New York, on Monday to be married. They explained that they had been married for twenty-two years, but as they had lost their marriage certificate they wanted to be re-married. Alderman Flynn performed the ceremony.

TWO OR THREE COLDS IN SUCCESSION will often establish the seeds of Consumption in the system, converting what was originally a simple, curable affection, into one generally fatal. While ordinary prudence, therefore, makes it the business of every one to take care of a Cold until it is got rid of intelligent experience presents a remedy in Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, thoroughly adapted to remove speedily all Coughs and Colds, and equally effective in the primary stages of Consumption, Asthma and Bronchitis.

OLD AND NEW.

BY MORLEY.

Whitely upon the earth the snow is lying,
The keen high stars are glittering in the sky;
The old year's late last hours are flying, flying;
A little while and we shall see him die—
The old gray year that step by step beside us
Trod through the windy March, the rainy June,
The Autumn that with golden smile defied us
To dream that Winter-time could come so soon!

And the year came with us so fleetly, gladly,
The flowers broke forth and bloomed about his feet,
The birds from brake and bower sang out madly,
And sense of our young life was full and sweet.
Was not the world, the whole glad world, before us?
Our steps went dancing down the sunny ways;
It was Arcadia's heav'n that arch'd o'er us;
Our lips, unknowing, sang Arcadia's hays!

We have left far, ah, very far, behind us
The poets' violets, the Arcadian Spring;
Now the year's changing bloom may but remind us
There was a soul of Youth in ev'rything!
Yet may we hope our best is still before us—
That best we loved so in the long ago—
When that the Great New Year is dawning o'er us,
We shall get back the things we used to know!

IN PERIL'S MIDST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "MY CROOKED PATHS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII—(CONTINUED.)

SENLEY TYERS crossed the room and picked up the fan, and was about to offer it to her, when he remembered her refusal to take the handkerchief from him, and with a sullen flush laid the fan on the table. She stretched out one hand and took it, her eyes meeting his in haughty questioning.

"What do you mean by danger?" she asked.

He raised his brows.

"I scarcely know. He had to ride along the coast some distance, and the people who lent him the horse were full of warning and forebodings."

She seemed actually about to rise, then she leant back and smiled.

"I think Mr. Tempest quite capable of taking care of himself," she said.

"Oh, yes," he laughed softly; "quite capable and strong enough. Still, I am rather surprised he has not written a line. When he comes back I will do another sketch of him. This, as you say, is really bad." He took it up and raised his palette-knife to dash it across the face, his eyes watching her sideways.

She sprang from the couch and caught his arm ere the knife could fall.

Her face was pale, her eyes flashing, her breath coming fast.

The two looked into each other's eyes in silence for an instant; then she said with a catch in her voice, proudly, haughtily—

"Do not destroy it, please. I—I will buy it!"

His face was pale as hers, but sallow; and a sinister smile played over it as he flung the knife on the small table beside the easel.

"I will make you a present of it, if you will accept it, Lady Florence," he said. "Stay," as she inclined her head and was about to sweep back to the couch. "Do not move!"

He turned quickly and caught up his brush and painted.

She watched him as he worked with haughty displeasure and impatience, then a look of wonder and interest began to dawn in her eyes. He was transforming the face on the canvas. It had been a dead, soulless work; it was now becoming, under his nervous, skilful hand, the face of a woman, alive and breathing love! He turned to her with a smile of triumph that still had something sinister in it.

"You see," he said, "there is life and soul there, now. You have given me what I wanted. And——" he paused, and fixed his eyes, glittering now with the jealousy, the rage that was burning within him—"and you have given me your secret!"

She recoiled instinctively, as one recoils from the uplifted head, the forked tongue of a snake.

"My—secret?" she breathed haughtily, yet with an undertone of vague dread.

"Yes," he said. He pointed to the sketch which she still held, which unconsciously she pressed to her throat. "Yes, I give you that portrait, Lady Florence. What will you say if I give you the original, the man himself."

The scarlet rushed to her face, her eyes blazed, then they fell beneath his half mocking, half imperious gaze.

"I do not understand you," she faltered almost inaudibly.

"I think you do," he said slowly. "Hush! your maid is listening. Come to me for a sitting to-morrow, and I will show you that I make no idle boast when I say that I know your secret, and that I can gratify the one, the dearest wish of your heart."

She tried to laugh, to beat him down—this low-born, presumptuous adventurer—with the scorn which flowed so readily from her eyes, her lips; but she could not. His eyes, his dark, sallow face, seemed to hold her in thrall. For the first time since their acquaintance they had changed places; it was she who, metaphorically, was at his feet, instead of he at hers.

She drew a long breath, opened her lips as if about to declare that she would not come again; then she turned away in silence. A smile of triumph curved Senley Tyers' thin lip. He took up her cloak, her fan, and approached her.

"Permit me," he said.

Yesterday—an hour ago—she would have drawn back with a surprised stare at his venturing to touch her garments. Even now she shrank a little and lifted her superb eyes; but eventually she submitted—she who a week ago had refused to take a handkerchief from his hand!

CHAPTER IX.

VANE rode on in a state of mind difficult to describe. It was so hard to believe that all that had happened during the last few days had really happened, and not been dreamed.

One thing, however, impressed the reality of the incidents upon him, and that was the remembrance of Nora's kiss. The touch of the soft, warm lips clung to his as he rode along, and aroused a feeling within him which haunted him mile by mile.

He could not get her out of his head—the pure, oval face, the dark gray eyes, the thick tresses of soft, silky black. The very tones of her voice rang in his ears.

The strangeness of the elder woman, the discovery that they were smugglers, the attack of the revenue men, all paled to insignificance in his mind beside the remembrance of that girlish face as it had been lifted to his with glowing eyes and quivering lips.

"Poor little Nora!" he muttered. "What an existence, what a fate! Can't read or write, and shut up with a smuggling aunt! She's worthy of a better fate than that. And she tried to break my neck! But she made up for it afterwards. If I'd been killed outright I should have had to forgive her.

He put his hand inside his waistcoat and smiled—a half tender, half pitying smile—to feel if the shilling was still there. It was there all right, and somehow the feel of the coin was pleasant to him.

"I wonder if something couldn't be done for her?" he asked himself wistfully. "She'll fall off those confounded cliffs, or come to grief with that smuggling business, as sure as fate. I wish I could do something—get her away into a kind of Home of some kind."

But even as he formulated the wish in his mind he felt how hopeless and futile it was. He had promised to say nothing of the existence of the two women; and, even if he had not given such a promise, he felt that Nora was the sort of girl who would go mad or die if she were shut up in a Home of any kind.

But for miles he thought of her, recalled her, dwelt upon her, as assuredly he had never yet dwelt upon the remembrance of any other woman. But then he did not regard Nora Trevanion as a "woman." She was just a half-wild child—girl to him; no more.

He rode fast, and had no difficulty in following the road; and presently he saw a gate before him opening on to a magnificent avenue of oaks.

As he opened the gate and rode up the avenue he was somewhat surprised to see that the drive was well kept, that the shrubs lining it were choice ones, and, like the trees, evidently well cared for. But his surprise was intensified as, at a sudden bend of the road, he came in sight of what, without exaggeration, may be called a stately mansion.

It had a long facade, pierced by arched windows, opening, on the ground floor, to a broad stone terrace with wide steps, leading to velvety lawns, studded here and there by beds glowing with autumn flowers.

It was so stately, so grand a place, that Vane pulled up hesitatingly. He had expected to see—well, a fairly good building of the farmhouse type, with a garden roughly kept, and in harmony with the wild scenery and inhabitants of the district.

This long-stretching pile, glowing whitely in the sunlight, "gave him pause," as Hamlet says.

"I suppose I've lost my way again," he said to himself.

He looked round for someone of whom he could make inquiries. He saw no one for a minute or two; but presently a small, bent old man in rough fustian, and carrying a pruning hook in one hand and a bundle of twigs in the other, came from amongst the trees, and set to work on the hedge.

Vane rode up to him, and hailed him in his usual free-and-easy style.

"Hi! Is this Vale Hall?"

The old man turned his head without raising himself, and looked up at him with a pair of keen, piercing eyes, which had in them, notwithstanding their keenness, that peculiar expression which grows into and sets hard in the eyes of the man who lives "far from the madding crowd;" every laborer one meets on a country road has it.

The old man looked at the stalwart figure and handsome face half vacantly for a moment as if he doubted the evidence of his eyes, then he said quietly—

"What?"

Vane repeated the question.

"Yes, this is Vale Hall," said the old man, and swung his hook again as if the questioner and the question were done with and quite ceased to interest him.

"Thanks," said Vane. "Can you tell me if Mr. Vale is at home?"

The old fellow stopped the hook and eyed him again.

"The squire's at home," he said.

Vane laughed his light-hearted laugh.

"I beg pardon; I ought to have said 'squire,'" he said. "Whereabouts are the stables, my man?"

"Back of the house," was the reply; and the hook swung vigorously again.

"Look here," said Vane, "perhaps you'll come and show me the way, and take my horse, will you?" and he rode up closer and held out half-a-crown.

The old man took it.

"Thank ye. I'll show ye," he said. And he walked beside the horse, with his hook turned in true laborer fashion over his arm.

"After all," said Vane, "I don't know why I should trouble you. I expect I shall find a groom there."

"Ay, like enough," said the man; "but you've paid me and I'll come.

"Right," said Vane cheerily. "I'm glad the squire is at home, for I've come all the way from London to see him——" "and nearly broke my neck in the journey," he had almost added.

The old man nodded, but did not appear to feel any particular interest in the statement.

"What a beautiful place you have here!" Vane went on. "I suppose you have lived here a long time?"

"Ay," was the reply. "A good many years, young sir."

"Come," thought Vane, "this uncle of mine keeps his servants a long time; he can't be altogether a bad fellow."

The old man led him past the front of the house—Vane checking the horse to look and admire. "Splendid!" he said—and round to the stables. A groom came forward, but the old man led the horse into a stall and haltered it, as if desirous of earning the half-crown, and Vane, wiping his forehead and flicking the dust from his clothes with his whip, said—

"Don't give him any water till he's cool, please. Give him a rub down first."

The old man nodded, and took off his coat as Vane turned away, and retraced his steps to the front again.

He went slowly up the steps and turned to look at the view. No better position for a house could have been chosen; wide-stretching lawns, a fringe of park, the hill-broken plain beyond, all lay before Vane's surprised and admiring eyes.

The hall door was open and he stepped in. It was a large hall, built, as Vane noticed with amazement, of Spanish mahogany. Broad stairs of the same wood led to the corridor, also of the costly timber which ran round three sides of the hall; a great window of stained glass occupied nearly a third of the back wall, and pictures, and flags, and men in armor were ranged on the other three.

A tremendous fire burned in a wide grate with dog-irons, and a huge deer-hound, which had been lying before the blaze, came forward growling to meet the intruder. Vane stretched out his hand and patted him, and the hound, after an investigating sniff, thrust his nose into Vane's hand and accepted the overture of friendship.

While he was talking to and patting the dog a servant in plain black livery came from behind the curtain that draped the wide door under the gallery.

"Can I see Mr. Vale?" asked Vane, and he took out a card.

The man took it, but looked doubtful.

"I don't know, sir; I will see. Will you please take a seat?"

Vane dropped into a chair beside the fire, and presently the man came back.

"Please follow me, sir," he said.

He crossed the hall, and ushered Vane into a library. If he had not been prepared by the space and luxury of the hall, Vane would have been astonished by the elegance and subdued richness of the room and its appointments. The book-cases and furniture were of teak, though Vane did not know it; the hangings were of old Amiens velvet; there were Wedgwood plaques in the panels, and carving that would have made a connoisseur's mouth water.

While he was looking round him with wonder and some amusement at the contrast to the reality of Vale Hall and his preconceived idea of it the door opened, and the old woodman entered.

Vane nodded.

"Oh," he said, "here you are again. Horse all right?"

The old man nodded and shuffled across the room to the fire and arranged the logs. Vane watched him curiously.

"I am waiting to see Mr. Vale," he said.

"What do you want with him?" asked the old man, with a keen glance.

Vane laughed shortly.

"Well," he said, "perhaps I'd better wait and tell that to him himself."

The old man sank into a chair, and pointed to another behind Vane. "Sit down," he said, "I am Reuben Vale."

CHAPTER X.

"I AM Reuben Vale," said the old man.

Vane started in amazement at the rugged face, with its keen, sharp eyes, and the bent figure, clad in well-worn laborer's corduroy; then the oddity of the situation forced him to laugh.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said; "but I was never so sold in my life. I had no idea—I think you ought to give me back that half-a-crown."

The old man smiled grimly.

"I think not," he said quietly; "I have earned it. I have groomed your horse with my own hands as you directed; the money belongs to me. But I am overpaid, I admit. Do you usually bestow half-a-crown where a shilling would be sufficient?"

Vane colored.

"Only when I am titting a gentleman in disguise," he said.

The retort seemed to please the old man, though the grimness of his face did not relax in the least.

"You have a ready tongue," he said. "And now may I ask why you have traveled this distance to see me? I presume you have come from London?"

"Yes," said Vane. "I left London four—five days ago."

"You have been a long while on the road?"

Vale nodded and smiled.

"Y—es."

"What is that on the collar of your coat?" asked the squire, pointing to the red smear. "Blood?"

Vane nodded.

"Yes," he said. "I met with an accident."

"A railway accident?"

Vane hesitated.

"No. It was nothing to speak of."

"And if it were, you do not wish to speak of it," said the squire. "Good. I invite no man's confidence. I am not curious. Proceed to your business, young man."

Vane drew his chair nearer the fire, and looked into it reflectively—"trying to find the beginning," as the Italians say.

The old man watched him closely.

"Perhaps you would like to rest and wash before you commence?" he said.

Vane jumped at the reprieve.

"Thanks, I should," he said. "I'm not in a fit state to present myself, I'm aware, but, as I said I've had an accident

—with a horse—and I haven't my portmanteau."

"It is upstairs in your room," was the quiet remark.

Vane stared, and the old man smiled faintly at his astonishment.

"It reached here some days ago. I heard that you intended honoring me with a visit, and I sent for your things. You had better go to your room, and reserve your business until you have rested and eaten."

Vane rose.

"I am aware that I am intruding, sir," he said.

The old man made a slight movement of his hand.

"I do not invite visitors," he said; "but when they come I endeavor to display some hospitality. You are——" he paused a moment, "welcome, Vane Tempest."

Vane bowed.

The squire touched a bell.

"Conduct Mr. Tempest to his room," he said to the servant, "and obey any orders he may give you."

The man inclined his head with profound respect, and Vane followed him out of the room, up the broad stairs, and into a spacious, luxuriously-furnished bedchamber. The man asked for the key of the portmanteau, unlocked it, and laid out Vane's clothes with the precision of a well-trained valet.

"The bell will ring in half-an hour, sir," he said.

"Very well, I shan't be half that time," said Vane: and he at once proceeded to get a thorough wash and change. While he did so, he tried to form some estimate of his uncle's character, but found it impossible. "Why on earth," he asked himself, "should a man with a million of money go about looking like a farm laborer, and accept half-a-crown from one of his own visitors?"

It was a knotty question, and Vane was obliged to put it aside, consoling himself with the reflection that, after all, his uncle had bidden him welcome.

The bell rang, and he went downstairs. The footman was awaiting him, and ushered him into the dining-room.

In space and sumptuousness it was on a par with the rest of the house. The walls were of panelled oak, the ceiling superbly moulded of the same wood; the hangings were of dark velvet, and the furniture of such a character as would have set a connoisseur's mouth watering.

Vane noticed that the immense sideboard was crowded with rich and heavy plate, and that the table, irreproachable in the matter of its glass and linen, bore also its share of silver centrepieces and epergnes.

It was quite evident that though the squire chose to dress like a farm-hand he had no objection to living in a palace.

The old man was seated at the head of the table, and scanned Vane as he entered, but carefully concealed any approval or admiration he may have felt for the handsome face and well-built form.

The servants brought Vane the dishes of several well-cooked courses, and filled his glass with superb claret; but Vane noticed his uncle's lunch was composed of a crust of bread and cheese and a quart of ale served in a silver flagon, and that he held the crust in his hand, and cut slices from it with his knife in true laborer fashion.

The old man maintained perfect silence during the meal, and evidently expected Vane to do the same.

But when the servants had left the room, he rose and pointed to an armchair beside the fire, and, talking a similar one, said—

"Now, if you please."

Vane took this as an intimation that he was to proceed to business, and, lighting his pipe—the squire had filled a long clay—began—

"I'm afraid I've got rather an unpleasant task before me, sir."

The old man eyed him grimly, but made no remark by way of encouragement.

"It isn't easy for a fellow to admit that he has been a confounded idiot," Vane went on, "but that's what I have got to do."

"Is it necessary?" queried the old man with sardonic sarcasm.

Vane laughed rather ruefully at the retort.

"I wish it wasn't," he said. "The fact is, sir, I have exceeded the allowance you have been good enough to allow me, and—and—am in a regular mess."

The squire fixed his piercing eyes upon him.

"Should you call a thousand a year a fair allowance?" he asked. "Wait. I ask because I want the information. I don't know anything about the life you and such as you, live. When I was your age I worked on the land. I owned part of it, it's true; but I worked—ay, as hard as any of the laborers, and harder. A hundred a year—two pounds a week—would have seemed wealth to me then. I did not spend eighteenpence a week on pleasure. You, I suppose, spend as much as half-a-crown?" with a grim smile.

Vane laughed ruefully and stared at his long legs.

"I worked like a laborer," continued the squire; "and your mother worked, too. She was my sister. There was no better girl at butter——" He stopped. "She was to have married my best and closest friend; but your father came along, and with his fine looks and fine feathers and high birth—the son of an earl, a great lord!—he won her heart away, and"—his voice grew thick and harsh—"and she left the man she was to have married, and left me. I never saw her afterwards." He was silent for a moment or two, puffing at his pipe and frowning with his shaggy brows; then he went on—"People said she was very lucky; that it was a grand match for her; that we Vales had got a lift in the world. But I didn't think so. The Vales were here a century before the Tempests were ever heard of."

Vane nodded. He had very little pride of birth about him.

"So I've heard," he said.

The squire frowned at the fire.

"I didn't think she was lucky, or that she'd be happy; and I'm of the same mind still. Why did she die so early if she was so happy? The Vales live into the seventies!" He glared angrily at Vane. "She died, and I—never saw her," he went on in a lower voice. "Your father died, too, and left you behind. I don't suppose you'd ever heard of me?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Vane quietly. "I can remember my mother," his voice softened, "as I sat in her lap, telling me about her brother—that was you—and how much she wished she could see him, and he could see me. I don't think, I am sure she never forgot you."

The old man peered at him half suspiciously, then gazed at the fire again.

"You were left, but I made no offer to help you. Your grandfather, the earl, came forward and educated you, and took care of you; and I expect if I, plain Reuben Vale, had offered any assistance, I should have met with a snubbing that would have lasted me my life."

Vane shook his head. He never could sit still and hear a man misjudged, especially when that man happened to be dead.

"You do my grandfather an injustice," he said. "I never knew a man put on less side than he did."

"'Less side,'" repeated the squire inquiringly. "What do you mean?"

Vane laughed apologetically.

That's a slang way of saying that he wasn't a proud man," he explained. "There wasn't an ounce of it in him. He was a perfect gentleman. I have reason to speak well of him, for he was very good to me. Of course when he died my cousin, the present earl, didn't feel that it was his duty to find me in coin, and—and——"

"In short," said the old man, "your great connections cast you off; and if it hadn't been for me, plain Reuben Vale—"

"I thought you were generally called the squire?" Vane could not help putting in.

The old man reddened and frowned.

"The foolish people give me a little I am not authorized to bear," he said with a growl. "I am just plain Reuben Vale. If it had not pleased God to put tons and tons of metal under my acres I should still be a working farmer, and unable to allowance the grandson of an earl."

Vane flushed.

"Have you finished, sir?" he asked.

"No," snapped the old man. "What I was driving at is this: As I said, when I was a young man a hundred a year would have been an ample income for me; but I was only a young farmer. You are—what is it they call it?—a 'swell,' an aristocrat. I can't even imagine your way of living. I was only in London once, and then only in the City. I suppose you live in a big house, with plenty of servants?"

Vane laughed.

"I have just five rooms—two living, a couple of bedrooms, and a bathroom—in St. James' street," he said.

The squire gazed at him thoughtfully.

"Five rooms. Then how do you spend a thousand a year—twenty pounds a week?"

Vane knitted his brows and stroked his moustache.

"Upon my word, sir, I don't know," he said; "and yet I can pretty well guess. There's the horses—I've got a couple, one for the dog-cart and another for riding; and—and there are gloves and—cigars, and——"

The old man eyed him keenly.

"And the play at your club—oh, I know—and your supper parties, and the money you lend your friends, and the women—"

Vane's face reddened.

"You can strike out the last item, sir," he said with quiet dignity.

The squire took his pipe from his mouth and looked at him searchingly, then nodded.

"In all but one way, then," he said, "you fling your money about—you waste it as if it were water. Is that right?"

"No, not quite," replied Vane, meeting the piercing eyes frankly. "I can't admit that I fling it about, or that I spend it like water. I just live as the other fellows do—as I'm obliged to do if I live with them at all. And that brings me to my purpose in coming down to you, sir."

"Ay," said the old man curtly. "Let's have it," and he leant back in his chair and puffed at his pipe. "You want money, of course?"

"I'm afraid I do," said Vane gravely; "but I want it for the last time. I mean I'm asking for it for the last time; I expect I shall want it often enough." He paused a moment, and drank some of his claret. "I am very much in debt. I came down to ask you to pay my debts, and to give me enough to leave the country. While I stay here in England—London, I can't help spending money and getting stone-broke every now and then. There is nothing I can do here. I'm too old for the army, and, if I wasn't, I couldn't pass the examination, and I don't know any other trade—the law, or anything of that sort. But I've a notion that I could do something in the colonies; I might get into the Cape Mounted Police. I can ride a bit—I win a steeplechase now and then—anyway, I shan't be surrounded by such temptations as I am in London. There must be something to be got by a fellow who has strong arms and is willing to use 'em."

"Yes, there is always some stone-breaking and roading-mending to be got in the colonies, I'm told," said the squire grimly.

Vane laughed.

"'Pon my word, sir," he said, "I think I'd rather go in for that than hang about town dodging writs."

The old man looked at him for a moment in silence, then he said—

"What is the extent of your debts?"

Vane considered for awhile.

"A couple of thousand pounds, sir," he said.

The squire smiled grimly, sardonically.

"That is a nice sum," he said, but not angrily. "And you expect me to pay them? You think I'm so rich that two thousand pounds will only be a flea-bite."

"No," said Vane quietly, "it is a large sum, even to a rich man. If I didn't think you were very rich, and could spare it, I shouldn't ask you for it, sir."

This charming piece of candor, so characteristic of Vane Tempest, seemed to stagger the old man. He took his pipe out of his mouth and frowned and pursed his lips.

"You speak your mind, nephew," he said.

It was the first time he had, in addressing him, referred to or acknowledged their relationship, and Vane felt encouraged.

"Well," he said, "I feel that it's the last time I shall ask you for any money, and——"

"You think that I shall be making a good bargain by giving a couple of thousand pounds to be rid of you, eh?" put in the squire.

Vane reddened.

"No, I didn't sir," he said quietly, but with sufficient emphasis. "I didn't think of that at all."

The old man fell back—he had leant forward to deal the last thrust—and smoked in silence for a minute or two, so long that Vane thought he was never going to speak, but at last he looked up and said—

"You are right, I am a rich man. They say I'm worth a million; I don't know; perhaps so, perhaps less, or more; and I am your uncle, your mother's brother. Why don't you ask me who I'm going to leave my money to?" He fixed a piercing gaze on the handsome debonnaire face.

Vane laughed quite easily.

"I haven't cheek enough for that, sir," he replied. "And, besides, I've no desire to be kicked out of the house; I'm too comfortable."

The answer seemed to please the old man. He grunted and scratched his chin, still eyeing Vane.

"Oh, you are comfortable, are you?" he said.

"Extremely so," said Vane, with a shake of his head and and a slight stretching of his long limbs. "I'll own that I was rather uncomfortable when I discovered that trick you'd played me. I don't think it was quite fair of you to play it so low down on me, or to pass yourself off as a servant and allow me to tip you——"

"And to stick to the half-crown," put in the old man with a grim smile.

"No," said Vane; "but I've got over that. I tell you friendly, sir, that whether you give me the money or not, I shall still be grateful to you for your past liberality to me, and that I shan't regret venturing to pay you a visit. And that reminds me. I suppose I'd better see about going."

The old man rose and stood before the fire, his pipe in his mouth, his head sunk on his breast, his eyes fixed on the floor.

"No," he said at last, "I wish you to stay. I will tell you when to go. I wish to show you my estate——Stop," he broke off, though Vane had made no attempt to speak. "If you think I've a notion of leaving it to you, of making you master of Vale Hall, better get rid of it as soon as possible. You will never inherit a rood of my land, or a penny of my money, Vane Tempest."

If he had expected Vane to look disappointed or chagrined, he himself was disappointed.

"All right, sir," said Vane cheerfully.

"You wonder why?" said the old man, frowning at him.

"No," began Vane, but the grim, stern voice cut him short.

"Perhaps I'll tell you before you go. Perhaps not. Now I'm going out, going round the sheep fields. You can go with me or stay at home, just as you please. This is Liberty Hall—to you."

"I'll go with you, of course," said Vane, springing to his feet. He let his hand fall upon the old man's shoulder—not presumptuously, but with that peculiar half-tender frankness which made the young man so fatally irresistible.

"Never mind the confounded money, sir," he said. "Let's be good friends and enjoy ourselves while I'm here."

The squire disappeared somewhere for the rest of the day, and Vane was left to himself. He sauntered about the place; went into the stables for one thing. He found several horses, all in good fettle, and evidently well cared for.

The gardens were extensive and admirably kept up, and the Home Farm, he learned, was actually the farm on which the squire had worked in his boyhood and early manhood.

He was informed by the footman, who seemed to have been told off specially to wait upon him, that the dinner hour was half-past seven and he went up to his room at seven, debating within himself whether he should dress or not.

He had brought an evening suit with him, and after a little hesitation he decided to put it on; at any rate he would be on the safe side.

When the great bell clanged out for dinner he went down, and found the squire metamorphosized. The corduroy suit had disappeared, and in its place the old man wore an evening suit of dark blue, with lace ruffles to his shirt, and brass buttons to his coat.

Vane had never, excepting in old prints, seen such a get-up. Probably the squire had never seen modern evening dress, for he looked Vane up and down and grunted, but whether with approval or condemnation it would be difficult to say. At any rate he must have found it impossible to refrain from admiring the stalwart form and distinguished air which belonged to his nephew.

The dinner was an extremely good one; but the squire confined himself to a chop and his silver flagon of ale, and left the many and well-cooked courses to Vane, who did full justice to them.

The meal was eaten, like the lunch, almost in silence; and when it was finished the squire drew his chair to the fire, and motioned Vane to do the same. But even then he did not seem inclined to talk, and smoked steadily, as if in profound thought.

At last he said.

"If you care to stay here, Vane Tempest, you are welcome. There are horses if you want them; choose one for your use. There is plenty of game, but you will have to put up with mine. I have no friends. No one comes to the Hall, and I never go beyond the bounds of the estate. Why should I?"

"Why, indeed, if it's large enough," said Vane.

The old man smiled grimly.

"If you ride round it you will need a good horse, and the exercise will give you an appetite, nephew," he rejoined. "There is only one thing I want you to understand, and that is that I don't like questions."

"Questions?" said Vane.

"Yes," he said with a frown. "If you happen to come upon anything that surprises you, keep your curiosity to yourself."

"All right, sir," said Vane in his prompt, frank way.

Soon afterwards the old man got up.

"I am an early riser, and I go to bed early," he said; "but you can sit up as long as you like. There's claret, and there is whisky and brandy. You can ring for anything else you. Good-night;" and with a nod he walked out.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

IN THE PAST.

BY E. G.

I sang of sunshine, though my heart
  Held not one single gleam
Of glorious sunlight, that with warmth
  Lit mountain, vale, and stream;
Of laughing light, that chased the clouds
  Across the joyous years;
And none could tell the singer's heart
  And eyes were filled with tears.

I sang of love that only brought
  Glad laughter in its train,
Of happy hours that held with truth
  A clear and glad refrain;
But deeper, clearer, in my heart
  A monotone was shed;
"Old love and new, tried love and true,
  Lie cold and still and dead."

How sad, the gladdest tones we hear,
  The eyes that seem most bright,
Should hush in sobs when none are near,
  And bathe in tears by night.
That thro' the clouds, the mist, the rain,
  So far should seem the shore
Where sunlight, laughter, love, and hope
  Clasp hands for evermore.

Lips That Are Near.

BY D. F. CUDLIP.

CHAPTER III.

AND you really mean to tell me, darling, that you love me enough to wait several years, perhaps, before we can think of getting married?"

"Love you, Jack, my own. I don't think you realize how I love you. Oh, I'm so happy, so very, very happy, Jack, for you say you love me, and that is all I want, dear. I could not live without your love, now you have once given it to me." And she lifted her great eyes to his face as she spoke.

He bent down and kissed her, and as their lips met it seemed to both as if they reached the very heaven of happiness; as if the sensations of a whole lifetime of intense joy were crowded into that one blissful moment.

"Mabel, my darling, I am not worthy of you. What have I done to deserve such happiness? So help me gracious, you shall never regret having given yourself to me. I will make myself more worthy of you, my queen."

"Hush, dear; you must not undervalue yourself. It is I who am so insignificent. What am I that you should have stooped to find me out and love me? The thought that you should love me almost overpowers me. I can hardly dare to think it is true."

Such is the humility born of a great love.

"Do you realise what marrying means, Mabel?" Jack asked, after a few moments' silence.

"Yes, of course I do, dear boy; it means poverty more or less, but I don't mind that—with you," she added softly; and her little hand stole into his strong one, and her eyes looked straight and bravely up at him.

"Shall I define poverty for you, that you may see it clearly before it is too late?"

"No, don't, Jack, dear; let us forget for a time, at least, that there is anything so disagreeable as poverty; let us be perfectly happy in the present. I want this to be the very happiest time of my life."

"Dear little woman, how unpractical it is; and yet, dear, perhaps you are right—we will enjoy our 'fool's paradise' for a time at least."

"That's just it, Jack. Every one will call us a couple of fools, won't they? Shall you mind very much being called a fool for marrying me?"

"Of course not; and if you are the cause of my folly, 'long may I be a fool,' say I."

"You dear old Jack. Now who is unpractical, I wonder?"

"I suppose I am, since you infer it. But never mind; there is plenty of hard fact before us, Mabel, so these early days shall be very happy and unpractical. 'Sufficient unto the day'—you know the rest."

Jack Macgreggor had asked Mabel to be his wife, and she had accepted him, and when the above conversation took place they had been engaged two days, and Jack, in his new-found happiness, quite forgot that he had only a few days before thought to himself, "Shall I make a fool of myself or her?"

The news of Mabel's engagement to young Macgreggor of the—th was received in many ways; some said it was such a pity for a young and pretty girl like herself to go and throw herself away on a penniless linesman.

Others kindly, "told you so;" they had seen how it would end all along; she had so deliberately set her cap at him that there was no alternative for him but to propose to her. Others again were really nice about it, and said it would prove the making of the man, give him an incentive to work, for, as his chief said, "he has plenty of brain power, but has been too lazy to use it; now, however, that he has an object to work for, he will buckle to and do really good work."

This was really the case. Hitherto, Jack had, in a very desultory fashion, written several stories that had been very well received, and there the matter ended. When however, he found himself engaged to "the dearest little girl in the world," he determined to make good use of his talents, and supplement his income by his pen.

He did not find much difficulty in disposing of his wares, for his stories, dealing for the most part with military life, were brightly and cleverly written, and very true to the life he depicted. There was nothing particular brilliant about them, but they "took" the popular taste, and consequently he was well paid for them.

As his colonel had said, his engagement had the effect of bringing out all his good qualities and, above all, of subduing that lazy selfishness which at one time threatened to stultify his energies.

Colonel Armstrong, Mabel's father, had given his consent willingly enough, for he was only too glad to get her off his hands, as he expressed it; "and any man who could keep her was welcome to do so, as far as he was concerned."

Bobby was, perhaps, the most enthusiastic of all in his congratulations. Visions of spending his holidays in barracks, amid all the paraphernalia of a soldier's life, lent warmth to his words. For Mabel had told him that, although she was going away from him and going to marry Mr. Macgreggor, he should of course come to stay with her always during his holidays, and then he could learn all about guns, drills, and all other delights of a soldier's life, in which his boyish heart delighted.

"Mabs," he said one day, "I'm awfully glad you're going to marry a soldier and not a civilian; it's so much better for me, you see, 'coz I like soldiers and barracks and all that."

Mabel herself looked radiantly happy, and a new beauty seemed to light up her face; the sad, wistful look seemed to vanish and give place to an expression that told of love satisfied. How often is it that even a plain face becomes beautified by this wonderful light of love.

It is the little worries of life that destroy beauty more than anything else. Remove those worries and the very plainest will become almost good-looking. The best way to secure this is to secure a great happiness—mind, it must be a great, all-satisfying happiness. Having done this you will find that very few of the little worries that used to be such a bother to you have any power to annoy you.

You will be astonished that such things should ever have annoyed you, and under the soothing influence of this great happiness you will grow, if not actually beautiful, at least very close to it. Looking round on the faces one meets, one can but come to the conclusion that there is but little of this kind of happiness in the world.

It had been arranged that Jack and Mabel were not to think of marrying for at least twelve months, by which time Jack hoped to get the adjutancy and also to settle down to literary work. Then he would be able to offer his wife a home with sufficient means to support her in comfort.

There would never be a superfluity of this world's goods by any means, but at least there would be just enough, with careful management, he thought, to enable them to live like gentlefolk, which for the credit of the regiment they were bound to do.

He threw himself heart and soul into his work. When he was not reading up for his exam., he was writing articles and stories for the various periodicals, and the balance at his banker's increased rapidly, for, as was mentioned before, his writing took the popular taste and consequently was well paid for.

Mabel, on the other hand, did her share of the work with her pencil. Hitherto her sketches and caricatures had never passed beyond her circle of friends; but now, at Jack's suggestion, she illustrated one of his "Military Sketches," and did it so cleverly that she received offers of work from various illustrated magazines. One thing led to another, and soon she had as much work as she could manage from that most paying branch of art, magazines illustrations.

How often when they were together would they map out their future life, that happy life when each was to be the complement of the other and live in perfect harmony and love.

They were not the first couple of fools, and as long as the world lasts, daily will other fools make the same mistake.

"Mabel, dear," Jack said to her one day, "I want you to come up with me next week and be introduced to my people. I've applied for ten days' leave. Will you come?"

"Of course I will. I am longing to see your mother, Jack; she must be such a darling. Did I tell you I heard from her this morning? such a sweet letter of welcome."

"Dear old mother; you and she are sure to like each other."

"She says she is prepared to like me very much simply on your account, sir. See what it is to have an adoring mother."

"Anyhow, old girl, it won't be long before she adores you on your own account. No one could be with you long without loving you. It's a marvel to me that every other man you've met hasn't fallen in love with you."

"It's a good thing for you they haven't, because, you know," she added, "I might have 'loved my love with an A because he asked me,' and then where would Mr. Jack Macgreggor have been?"

"Down in the lowest—but we never mention that region; the mere fact of your loving me lifts me above the common herd, and I think it will eventually land me in heaven."

"Jack, don't be flippant; I don't like it," and an expression of pain passed over her face.

"I beg your pardon, dear; I didn't mean to shock you. My idea was not flippant, although my words sounded so. I really meant what I said, Mabs."

"But, Jack, darling, you mustn't think me such a paragon of perfection. There is nothing so good about me; I am only just the same as other girls."

"Nothing good about you! Why, Mab, you can have no idea what an influence the love of a good pure woman like yourself has over a man. I really believe that if there were more women like you there would be very few really bad men in the world; we should be shamed into leading better lives."

"The men would have to think as you do first, though; you forget that, my Sir Galahad. Nevertheless," she added, "I quite agree with you that we women have a great influence for good if we care to use it; but most of us are too lazy or too cowardly to use it. It is so much easier to fall in with other people's ideas than to have an opinion of one's own and stick to it. But, to return to the question in hand; what day do you want me to show myself to your people?"

"Let me see, to-day is Thursday; can you be ready by Monday?"

"Yes, certainly; but, Jack, I rather dread the ordeal of being trotted out for inspection by your people. There is one thing; your mother, at any rate, is prepared to receive me cordially."

"My dear little girl, they will do the same directly they see you."

Accordingly, on the Monday following, Jack and his fiancee traveled up together to his Surrey home, where the old squire, his wife and two daughters were anxiously waiting to see what sort of a girl it was who had won the heart of the idolized son and brother.

It was a bitter blow to the old man that his son Jack was not going to marry money, and so retrieve the fallen fortunes of the family. The property was mortgaged up to the hilt by Jack's eldest brother, who, having done all in his power to ruin the family prospects, left England deeply in debt, and was only heard of occasionally in some out-of-the-way corner of the world, living a hand-to-mouth existence.

His father sternly set his face against any communication with the prodigal, and forebade his name ever to be mentioned in his presence. The mother, womanlike, on the other hand, could not shut out her first-born from her heart, and many a check, saved by the most careful economy on her part from her own private money, found its way to the outcast.

She would have been doubly grieved could she have seen how the money was spent in low gambling dens. But she did not see, and kept up the delusion to herself that the money she sent him helped him to live a more respectable life, and very likely be the means of obtaining honest work for him in the future.

Jack was quite right in his supposition that Mabel would win for herself a welcome from his family. The old squire almost forgave her her want of money, under the influence of her charming manner. She saw to his various wants, and anticipated his wishes in little things, in a way that his own family never did, and which was very pleasing to the old man.

Mrs. Macgreggor had been ready to welcome her from the first, and after a very short time pronounced her to be all that could be wished as a wife for her boy, Jack.

"But I wish, my dear," she would say, "that we could do more for our son, as what little there will be saved will have to go to the girls; the boys must look after themselves. However, as I tell Jack, he ought to make a really good income by his books; I'm sure any publisher ought to be only too glad of the opportunity of getting them."

Dear old lady, she has had the very vaguest ideas about literature and publishers, and always spoke of his writings, whatever they were, as his "books." But on the other hand, she had very strong ideas as to his abilities, and, as is the way of mothers, took "her goose for a swan."

It was a happy fortnight that Mabel spent with her fiance and his people. They make a great deal of her, which was pleasant, and she was made to feel a person of importance by reason of her engagement to Jack, and she being very much in love with Jack, was quite content, even proud of her glory reflected though it was.

It had been decided by family conclave that the young people were not to be married for two years at least. This would give Jack time to start making that income which was to support them in the future. He had applied for the adjutancy of the foreign battalion, of which he was almost sure, and at the latest he would get his company in twelve months.

All things considered, with his increase of pay and the money he could make by his writings, there ought not to be anything to prevent their starting on their married life in two years time. Wealth they would never have, but at the same time it would not be grinding poverty, as Jack at first seemed to think would be their lot.

Two days before the fortnight's leave was up there came a blue official-looking document for Lieutenant Macgreggor, informing him that he was to hold himself in readiness to embark on H. M. S. "Himalaya," for India, on account of his appointment as adjutant of the second battalion of his regiment.

As a means to an end he was delighted at the news, but, otherwise, the thought of leaving the girl he loved was very bitter to him, while she could hardly bear the thought of the long separation.

"Jack, isn't it a five years' appointment?" she asked on first hearing the dread news.

"Yes, Mabs, it is; but you must come out to me at the end of two years, and then we shall be together for three of those years, darling, at any rate."

It was after breakfast, and these two had strolled out into the garden together to discuss the change of plans apart from the others.

"I suppose I ought to be glad that you have got this appointment, Jack, dear, as every little helps forward our plans; at the same time I cannot help being afraid."

"Afraid, Mabel! What is there to fear?"

"Don't be angry with me, Jack, but I cannot help fearing that when you are away from me you will learn to forget me. I do not believe in 'absence making the heart grow fonder,' unless it be somebody else. You see, Jack, dear," laying her head carelessly on his shoulder and stroking the sleeve of his coat with her hand, "I shall not be there to love and to be loved by you, and by degrees, instead of associating me with happy hours, you will involuntarily associate the idea of me with unpleasant things, such as petty economies and hard work; which is to bring grist to the mill eventually for me. Don't stop me, Jack," as he was about to protest; "I know exactly what you will say; that you will enjoy working hard for my sake, and even will not mind practicing economy, and now you mean it most thoroughly, I know; but the time will come when the worries of hard work and the petty annoyances of economy will become so associated with me that you will not be able to separate us; the name that you love now—I mean my name, Mabel—will no longer be a name to conjure with for you, but the mere mention of it will

depress you, and yet all the while you will think you still love me the same as ever; but it will not be the same, Jack, 'twill be

'The little rift within the lute,
Which bye and bye will make all music mute.'

And when the music of love dies it becomes a mere dead and soulless machine. Can you follow me, dear? I am afraid I cannot make my meaning clear, but I felt that I must tell you my thoughts."

His only answer was to draw her more closely to him, and press passionate kisses on her lips and forehead, while he thought, "Where did she learn such hard worldly wisdom? for it is true, brutally true. What a curse my poverty is, for I must confess I hate poverty," then aloud he added:

"I think I see what you mean, little woman; but don't you think that real true love is above feeling the annoyances you speak of? At least, things have not the same power to annoy when love is 'on guard.'"

"Very true, but with you men love will not live on memories; you must have something tangible to keep love awake, otherwise love gets drowsy, is then very much 'off guard,' and ends—well, you know how," and she shuddered slightly as she finished the sentence.

"What a gloomy little woman it is this morning. I declare you're shivering as if it were winter. Are you cold?"

"It's only a goose walking over my grave, as the people say. You are not going indoors, are you, Jack? I'm not at all cold, dear, and I do want to have you all to myself this morning at least. After that your own people will want you to be with them. I mustn't be too exacting or try to keep you too much to myself, must I? Do you know, Jack, I think lovers are selfish; here am I, who have only known you for a comparatively short time, keeping you all to myself, while your mother, who has slaved for you and loved you all your life, sees little or nothing of you. If I keep you to myself now you are going to India, she will hate me, and small wonder, so after this morning, dear, I shall take my share of your time with the rest of your family."

"Anyhow, little woman, you will be the first to see me again; you mustn't forget that you are to join me in two years time; the others won't see me for five years at least."

"Am I likely to forget it, Jack, dear?" she answered softly, then turning suddenly and facing him she said, "There is one thing I want you to promise me before you go, Jack, and that is——" here she paused and there was a perceptible catch in her voice; steadying herself by a great effort she raised her sad eyes to his and said, "to promise me that when directly the thought of me becomes a weariness to you, to let me know so that I may release you; but you must promise me to tell me the truth, however hard it may be for me to bear."

"That is a promise easily given," he answered gaily, and stooping down he gave her a long lingering kiss that set her pulses throbbing with exquisite happiness. "For I shall never, never cease to love you, my darling, my own darling."

CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT three weeks after the conversation recorded in the last chapter, the troopship "Himalaya" was slowly wending her way out of Portsmouth harbor, and occasionally the wind blowing on shore brought faint echoes of "The girl he left behind him" to the group of sad-faced people assembled on the quay, who were sorrowfully and silent watching the great white trooper as she slowly glided to the mouth of the harbor, and remorselessly carried away their dear one from them.

Conspicuous among the little crowd stood Mrs. Mcgreggor and Mabel, who had come together to soothe last of her son, and the other of her lover. At the last moment the parting was terrible; Mabel clung to him passionately and when the second bell rang for the passengers' friends to leave the ship, she was led off by Mrs. Macgreggor in a half-dazed condition.

Not a tear fell from her eyes, not a sob escaped her lips, although her eyes seemed to her like balls of fire and something seemed to stay in her throat and choke her. If only the tears would fall; if only she could utter a sound, and stop that awful choking sensation; it was like a horrible nightmare.

Jack, her Jack, had gone and left her, and something told her he would never be the same Jack again; he had gone beyond her; she had seen the last of him; she had said good-bye. All that was left was the sight of the trooper, and each moment that went further and further, and as she strained her burning eyes to watch the progress of the vessel, her ears caught the strains of "The girl he left behind him," and all that day and for many days after every sound resolved itself into that air; everything that moved seemed to be dancing in time to it, until, worn out by the strain and tension of her overstrung nerves, she broke down, and a merciful unconsciousness relieved her for a time.

Meanwhile Jack Macgreggor, full of love for the who was one day to be his wife, wasted no time and worked hard at his self-imposed task, so that by the time they reached India he had got through a very fair amount, in the shape of the short stories, of life in a troopship, illustrated by himself with very clever pen-and-ink sketches. These were destined for one of the many illustrated magazines. Besides these he was well into the second volume of a "three-decker."

It must not be inferred from this that Jack had studiously shut himself up in his cabin, to work and to think of nothing but the "girl he left behind him." By no means, he took his share in the gaieties with as keen a zest as any there, and was universally popular, in spite of the fact of his engagement being known.

For as many of the ladies said, "As a rule newly-engaged men are such poor company, but Mr. Macgreggor is so very sensible, you know; he does not go about moping because his lady-love is not here." No, he most certainly did not, and yet he would have been most horrified if any one had hinted at his being in the least disloyal to Mabel, for she held his heart, he told himself; these girls flattered his vanity, and mild flirtations with them passed the time very pleasantly, without hurting any one.

In fact, Jack was no hero, as Mabel judged him, but a man; a vain and, it must be confessed, rather a selfish one at that. For all this seeming forgetfulness, he was really and truly very much in love with Mabel Armstrong, and he gloried in working hard for her sake, and looked forward eagerly to the time when she should come out to Simla to join him. But two years is a long time to wait, and this thought depressed him.

Six months after his arrival in Simla, there was a big ball given at Government House. It was to be the event of the season, gay as that season had been, and speculation was rife, for several engagements were on the tapis, and it was prognosticated that this ball would most likely bring things to a climax.

The great catch of the season was a certain Miss Holroyd, the only daughter and heiress of a wealthy merchant prince.

This girl had been educated in England, but now, her education completed, she had returned to her parents in India, and was the magnet which attracted all the fortune-hunters in Simla.

In spite of this adulation she received at their hands, she was too pure and, strange as it may appear, unsophisticated a nature to realize that it was her money that attracted them. She only thought how kind every one was to her, and how happy she was to have so many friends, and to be grown up and at school no longer.

Of all the men who fluttered round this unspoilt beauty, for a beauty she most undoubtedly was, Jack Macgreggor was the one of all others that she preferred, for he never overwhelmed her with flatteries, and when he praised the manner in which she rode her thoroughbred, she was really pleased, because she knew he meant what he said, and that she must have done well to call forth his approbation. In justice to him, be it said, he did not try to flirt with this girl at all, but he liked her for her simple unaffected ways, that contrasted so favorably with the manners and customs of Simla society, although he had adapted himself wonderfully quickly to those ways, considering all things.

At first he had denied himself many of the luxuries that the others indulged in, but after a time he found it very hard indeed that he should be the only fellow who didn't keep a couple of polo ponies and a horse and dogcart.

Again, it was very hard, when asked to join a party of men at the club for billiards, to have to make some excuse, because he couldn't afford to spend money in that way. In fact, in a hundred and one ways he found his chains gall him, and little by little he loosed those chains till, in a short time, he rode, flirted, played billiards and indulged in every extravagance that came to hand with the best of them, and was voted by all an acquisition to the battalion.

Occasionally his conscience smote him. This generally happened after the mail came in and he had read a letter, full of loving trust and tender, loving words, from the "girl he'd left behind him."

Then he would reproach himself for having been such a selfish brute as to spend the money he was making for her sake upon himself, while she was working hard to lay by a nest-egg, so that, as she wrote, "I shall not come to you quite dowerless, dear Jack," and then she went on to say "that she hoped he was not working too hard, as she should never forgive herself if he was to overwork himself and break down, with no one belonging to him to nurse him."

He flushed ever so slightly as he reads these words, for though he had been working hard at his writings, he was fain to confess that the money had all been spent by himself on himself.

Then he would make good resolutions, for, as he said to himself, he did love Mabel dearly, and she was worth a sacrifice; but he could not forget that it was a sacrifice, and accordingly it depressed him.

I have said there was to be a ball at Government House. Now, the day previous to this had brought one of those letters from Mabel, which had the power of depressing Jack, so much so that he had made up his mind not to put in an appearance, but meant to stay at home and get through some "copy" that had got woefully behindhand of late, and, "By Jove!" he added to himself, "I'll sell 'Tartar' and one of the ponies. I must make the one polo pony and my charger suffice. My Queen Mab thinks I'm selfish; I must try and justify her thinking so. Goodness knows, I've been quite selfish enough so far."

In the meantime, he thought he would go for a ride on "Tartar." It would cheer him up, and he could make his plans and resolutions better when he was cheerful, and he was always cheerful when in the saddle.

So Tartar was brought round, and a look of pride—the pride of ownership—came over Captain Jack Macgreggor, as he stood looking at this beautiful piece of horseflesh. His small head, large prominent eye, soft as a woman's, and slender pasterns betrayed his Arabian ancestry, while his splendid quarters showed that he must have come from some good thoroughbred stock.

In fact, the mixture of English thoroughbred and Arab resulted in uniting strength with speed, and graceful slender limbs with plenty of staying power, Tartar being the embodiment of these qualities.

No wonder Captain Jack Macgreggor was proud of him, but he soon remembered his resolution, and determined to carry it out and part with his beautiful horse before he had time to repent.

But in the meantime he would ride him down the Mall and show him off him for the last time. After that—well, never mind. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." He would enjoy this one ride, at least. Already the fact of being in the saddle had lightened his spirits, and it was a by no means gloomy face that greeted Miss Belle Holroyd as she rode to meet him in the Mall a few minutes later.

"How d'you do, Captain Macgreggor? How splendid Tartar looks. I have been watching you both for some time," and she turned a radiant face towards him as she spoke, expressive of undisguised admiration both for horse and rider.

Jack was not blind, and he could not help being flattered by the girl's open admiration.

"He is a beauty. I shall be very sorry to part with him," and he patted Tartar's satin neck affectionately as he spoke.

"Part with him!" she repeated. "But you are not thinking of such a thing, are you? I thought you were so fond of him."

"So I am, but you know the proverb, Miss Holroyd—'Needs must when the devil drives,'" and he laughed uneasily as he said it, for it flashed across him in a moment, Mabel's words to him long ago, and the "devil" he spoke of was poverty, and Mabel was already getting to be associated with disagreeable things, so he laughed uneasily as he said it.

"Why, Captain Macgreggor, you talk as if you were a married man's heavy responsibilities, instead of a bachelor, with no one but yourself to think about," and she laughed heartily enough at the idea of this well-dressed, easy-going young man feeling any pangs of poverty, for she had never heard of his engagement—that fact had been lost sight of some time ago by everybody. You see there was nothing to keep this fact before their eyes, and they had forgotten they had ever heard it, and he did not remind them. This was not out of any desire to keep his engagement secret, but simply because no one ever said anything to him, so he never said anything himself—and it was forgotten, that was all.

"Really, Miss Holroyd" he replied, "you seem to think it a laughing matter that I should be hard up," and was going to add, "but I have some one to think about besides myself," when his words were checked by an expression of pain and regret on his companion's face as she turned it frankly towards him.

"I beg your pardon, Captain Macgreggor. I'm really sorry if you are hard up; it must be so dreadful." And a look of pity for the misfortunes of this "gallant son of Mars" softened her face, and the thought of how willingly, ay, lovingly, she would relieve those misfortunes, if only he would give her the right, brought a flush of embarrassment to her cheek.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

AIR-BRAKES.—The most improved air-brakes now placed on locomotives are capable of controlling a train of 100 cars.

ASBESTOS.—The placing of a bit of asbestos into the tip of a lamp wick is said to have increased the brilliancy of the light 30 per cent.

COLORING IRON.—A new method of coloring iron has been discovered in England which entirely prevents rust, even though the metal be brought to a red heat.

WIND-WHEEL.—Eugene Baldwin, an amateur electrician of Montreal, has devised a wind wheel, which, in connection with a dynamo and storage batteries, furnishes all the lights he needs in his house.

ELECTRIC LAMPS.—London policemen will probably abandon their well-known "bullseye" before long. A tiny electric lamp has just been tried instead of the lantern. It gives a good light for seven hours and is much less weighty.

PROJECTILES.—Professor Fritch, in a recent lecture in the Museum of Ethnology, at Berlin, said that with the aid of electricity he had been able to photograph projectiles in transit. He exhibited photographs showing the air waves caused by the missiles, which form a legible record of the velocity with which they had traveled.

SMOKE PHOTOGRAPHS.—The latest thing in cigar and cigarette holders is to make them develop a small photograph by the action of smoke passing over specially prepared paper. With each holder is supplied a small packet of plain white photographic paper about the size of a postage stamp. One of these is placed in the interior of the holder, and while being smoked the ammonia vapor which arsises from the tobacco causes the photograph to become visible.

CAMELS.—A German paper asserts that the camels which were introduced into German South-west Africa last year have proved most valuable as a means of keeping up communication between distant places as well as for long journeys into the interior of the country; the power of these remarkable animals of being able to travel for an entire week without food or water has been put to the test again and again. They are said to stand the climate well, and are not subject to many fatal diseases which attack both horses and cattle in this part of South Africa.

Farm and Garden.

INSECTICIDES.—The modern fruit grower must constantly use insecticides. Get all the information possible this winter so as to intelligently combat fruit pests next season.

WASTE.—More food than is required is a waste, as much will be thrown under foot and trampled. There is no fixed allowance. The best rule to observe is to give each animal as much as it will eat up clean and be satisfied.

BREEDING.—In all the history and theory of breeding nothing seems so much required to be told over and over again as the fact that to breed for a quality it is necessary to breed from other animals that have that quality.

LOSING FLESH.—Even with the best of food, an animal will lose flesh in winter unless it is well sheltered. This means not a close roof only, but, freedom from draughts of air. A hole or crack in the wall is more damaging to an animal than exposure to the open air.

EGGS.—A large egg may not bring any more in the market than a smaller one, but it costs the farmer more food to produce it. For that reason the farmers should advocate the selling of eggs by weight, instead of by the dozen. It would be fairer to both producer and consumer to sell by weight, while the breeds of hens that lay large eggs would be preferred.

FEEDING.—It is claimed that feeding pigs with ground wheat and corn mixed will make more lean in the pork. The experiments now going on will show more later on about this. The market now is less for fat, and more for small and medium weights. To accomplish this, and yet turn them off with economy, you should mature them well on grass, and finish with corn, varied as much as possible by bran, ensilage, oil meal, and other food items which will go less directly to making fat.

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TO OUR READERS.

As this is the season when our friends and readers are no doubt thinking of kindly holiday remembrances of each other, we suggest that a good way to accomplish this worthy object, with certain satisfaction and benefit all round, is to give a year's subscription to THE SATURDAY EVENING POST. Ordinary gifts are apt to become less reminiscent of the giver after a few days or so, but THE POST would keep the time and the occasion and the memory of the giver bright, with its weekly visits to the household, all through the year. Just think and see whether any present could be given of more real value and usefulness than THE POST.

A New Year Reverie.

Another New Year lays a reminding hand upon us, and says, "Think!" It is not often that some of us have time for reflection. But now there is a lull after the Christmas merriment, before the holiday feeling has passed away, while, sated with the mid-winter season, "from full hearts still unsatisfied we sigh;" and so we approach, with minds prepared, the time when serious thought is most natural.

Are there many people, we wonder, who pass the New Year by without a single introspective glance? "It cannot be pretermitted by king or cobbler," said quaint Charles Lamb; but is it not? There are, no doubt, some who have lost sight of time, who drift, careless whither they go or where they have arrived, to whom to-morrow will be as yesterday, this year as the last, who are as reckless as Time itself, and to it each year must be but as an indistinguishable drop in an ocean; but most of us are arrested for a moment at least by the thought of the New Year, and some are not disinclined for the reverie that so seldom leads them away from the "noisy present."

It is not profitless thought, this lingering over the past, this tender dallying with our own place in the world. True, we cannot modify events one iota by any amount of thinking; the tide of circumstance flows on, and we may not control it. But we can use our thoughts to alter ourselves, and so alter our relation to the universe; and if we do that, our New Year reverie may be more than a sentimental indulgence—it may be a reforming process.

What is the age at which reverie turns backward instead of forward? The young man who has not passed twenty-five ought to have his thoughts almost wholly ahead. He cannot have much past that repays survey; nor can he have lost hope of the future, unless his incapacity is patent and overwhelming.

It is when a man reaches the middle line of active life, from forty to forty-five, that his reminiscences become gradually of more importance than his provisions of later years. He turns towards the greater half of his life. Now he begins to have sufficient evidence to trace the natural history of his own being.

It is by comparing our present attainments with the ideals formed in early manhood that we can probably make the best use of our New Year retrospect. To youth all things seem possible, even the speedy regeneration of mankind.

What is noble or romantic easily influences the susceptible nature of the inexperienced apprentice to life; and he does not guess at what lies in the dark lurking corners of the human heart.

All the old, old causes that have been fought for and fought against under varying names ever since the world began appeal afresh to each generation, in the same way that the dawn and the spring eternally renew his spell. How the world would have been remodelled if we could have carried out the dreams of our youth! The way looked so plain and short!

What is our relation towards those thoughts now? Do we still cherish those early hopes, though sobered by experience? Or is the gloss gone from life? Alas for the man who in gaining the world has lost his own soul—the man without any beliefs, who asks, What is the use of all your teaching and polishing? Anybody can live a faith-forsaken life, though it is sad enough; anybody can sink into the sensuality of worldly-pleasure, physical enjoyment, amused cynicism, hopeless content; anybody can drift with circumstances and eat, drink, and be merry—or starve and hate—feeling that nothing matters since to-morrow we die.

Have we followed that easy course? It takes a true man to retain his purity and loftiness of motive when brought into contact with the greed, hypocrisy, and grossness of the struggling world; to clear away the false ideals that have been cherished but found to be untenable, and to replace them by other pictures of what is right and good; to preserve a belief in the inherent beauty and attractiveness of honesty and kindness.

Are we still caring for the raising of the race? Do we look upon our fellow-men with the interest and charity and the desire to be helpful which once animated us? It is saddening to think that the world's good works are very largely in the hands of its young men, that disenchantment or carelessness or laxiness comes with growing years, and the best experience is withdrawn from the throng and kept for private use. Look into the working of almost any institution that is meeting the immediate needs of the day, and you will find that it is the young who are ardent, energetic, hopeful, masterful, wrong-headed, but successful; while wisdom sits quietly by its own fireside, and criticises eagely and comfortably.

This is the time when good resolutions are most naturally made. That they will not all be kept is not a sufficient reason for despising them indiscriminately. If we could prevail upon a score of intimate friends to write down honestly the good resolutions that occur to them most readily, when they are overhauling their character and planning its improvement, there would be a very curious revelation of disposition. That may be inferred from the resolutions of notable men that from time to time have been confided to the world.

Dean Swift and Benjamin Franklin supply contrasted examples. The satirical cleric, at the age of thirty-two, he then being engaged in hungrily seeking preferment, sat himself down to write resolutions for his guidance in after-life, and particularly when he was old, and every clause began with a "not." To avoid what was improper or tiresome or superfluous seemed to be the limit of the worthy man's moral ambition.

At the other pole was the Yankee printer, with his neatly-arranged table of all the virtues ruled off with red ink, and carefully marked day by day according to the progress made in self-mastery. All Franklin's objects were positive, pointing to something to be done rather than something to be avoided, unless we call the resolution negative which enjoined him never to speak except to talk good sense.

We are not advocating any such cast-iron system as that adopted by Franklin, for it would certainly result in making most men insufferable prigs; we merely point out the opposite forms into which different temperaments lead men to cast their moral aspirations. One says, "Let me be strong;" another is content with "Let me not be weak."

And in any case it is probably the better that good resolutions should be framed and their keeping attempted, for it gives definiteness to our aims and helps us to bend our powers more steadily towards a determined end, which is all that we can do. But enough of this moralizing and introspection—weaknesses both if they be indulged in too often, though they are allowable, and, let us hope, not unprofitable at this moment when the tide of the years is again turning. Let us look away from ourselves to the wider issues that must attract our thoughts if we are to live worthily.

WITH regard to the choice of friends, there is little to say; for a friend is never chosen. A secret sympathy, the attraction of a thousand nameless qualities, a charm in the expression of the countenance, even in the voice or manner, a similarity of circumstances—these are the things that begin attachment.

THERE is often a duty of secrecy where no definite promise has been exacted. We are not sensitive enough or delicate enough in this respect. We sometimes say, "It was not told to me in confidence," when a very little reflection would show us that such was intended and taken for granted.

SOCRATES was pronounced by the oracle of Delphos to be the wisest man in Greece, which he would turn from himself ironically, saying there could be nothing in him to verify the oracle except this, that he was not wise and knew it, and others were not wise and knew it not.

BETWEEN sincerity and politeness there need be no war, no antagonism, no separation. They can grow together, each welcoming the other to its side. All sincerity can be made beautiful by politeness, and all politeness can be made honorable by sincerity.

WE must have a weak spot or two in a character before we can love it much. People that do not laugh or cry, or take more of anything than is good for them, or use anything but dictionary words, are admirable subjects for biographies.

THE good that a woman can do toward the great world at large is as nothing compared to her possibilities in her own home if she be wife or mother.

FIVE great enemies of peace are ever with us—avarice, ambition, envy, anger and pride; if these were banished, we should enjoy perpetual peace.

HUMILITY is most serviceable as an under-garment, and should never be worn as an overcoat.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

EVE.—What you have seen is called bullion; that is, gold and silver before it is coined into money. We do not know the measure of the lumps of precious metal.

JEMIMA.—At a silver wedding the presents consist of silver articles either for personal adornment—brooches, pins, etc.—or for use—tea or coffee pot, jelly glasses, cruet stand, etc., etc.

PADEREWSKI.—It is almost impossible to give in type pronunciations of foreign proper names. Paderewski is a case in point. Roughly you may follow the spelling, with accent on third syllable.

IGNORANT.—The origin of St. George as the patron Saint of England is somewhat obscure. King Arthur is said to have installed him in that capacity. St. George was one of the early Christian martyrs.

JOHN R. S.—The origin of the symbol "cwt." for hundred is as follows. "C" is the initial letter of the Latin word centum, meaning a hundred, and "wt" are the first and last letters of the word "weight," and are used as a contraction for it.

CONNIE.—It would seem as if there were nothing but rudeness meant by the man's behavior. Persistent staring is not the way to get an introduction to any modest girl. We should advise you to avoid the man, and let him see that you do.

MILTON.—Broadly stated, freehold property is a man's own to dispose of as he sees fit; copyhold property is held subject to certain manorial rights and customs, and the lease is renewable on payment of certain fines to the lord of the manor. What these are in any particular case we cannot undertake to say.

SWEET-TOOTH.—To make jujube paste, take of gumarabic one pound; dissolve in a pint and half of water, and add one pound of sugar. Evaporate to a very thick consistence, and when cooled a little, but while still warm enough to run, turn into shallow tin pans previously oiled. Any flavor may be added before turning it out.

CLAUDE.—Pure air is always invisible; steam is air out of water, and it is invisible as long as it is contained in a chamber as hot as itself. The moment it issues into a cold sphere the water in it condenses, and it is then "seen" in the form of soft-rolling fog or mist. Watch it escaping from a pipe and will note an interval of two or three inches between the pipe and the first appearance of the white steam; condensation beginning at that point.

PERPLEXITY.—You have treated your lover very badly—with pettishness, unkindness, and an avalanche of expostulation, explanation, and recrimination. We do not wonder that he has been driven off. If he were to be reconciled and were to marry you, and you thought fit to revert to your differences, they would, at the rate you have expounded them to us, make a text for a lifetime's talk. Our sympathy is on the side of the young man. Take a word of advice—Do not let your tongue run away with you.

JEMMY.—Put a little new milk in a saucer, a little brown soap in another, and have by your side a clean towel folded three or four times. Spread the glove out carefully on the cloth. Dip a piece of clean white flannel in the milk, and with the wet flannel take up a good bit of soap. Then rub the glove with the flannel briskly from the wrist to the fingers, taking care to see that it does not slip. When the glove, if white, looks of a dingy yellow, or if colored dark and spoils, shake it well and hang it in the open air to dry. If carefully carried out this method of cleaning kid gloves is one of the simplest and best known.

TROUBLED.—The complexion is often impaired by irregularity of inhaling of confined and vitiated air, and indolent habits. To renovate the complexion, frequent exercise in the open air should be taken, moderation observed in eating, and regular hours for retiring and rising adopted. In bathing the face avoid it when heated, and use tepid water. Dry well, first with a smooth towel, and afterwards rub the cheeks with a tolerably coarse one. Add to this frequent bathing by means of a tub-bath or a sponge, and more will have been done to benefit the complexion than by any other means. Some ladies make use of dry flannel with which to rub the body.

A. T.—"To take a person down a peg," of which you inquire the origin, is to be traced to music and to the wide-spread knowledge of it in Shakspere's time, when every barber had a lute or guitar, on which his customers strummed or played while waiting their turns. The simile is used with much force in Othello, act ii. sc. 1, when Othello greets his wife with love and delight, kisses her, and wishes that the noise of such kisses should "the greatest discords be that e'er our hearts shall make;" upon which, Iago, carrying on the musical simile, observes aside—

"O, you are well-tuned now!
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music,
As honest as I am."

Or it may be in the sense of diminishing a person, as one does wine in a pegged or peg tankard—a silver cup with little pegs inside at regular intervals, denoting quantity. Many such tankards exist in old mansions, and at Oxford there are several in the Museum. "Come, friar, drink down to your peg," says one in Longfellow's play. To take it down a peg was therefore to diminish the potency and quantity of the draught. These explanations may suit our "impetuous young lady;" we adhere to the phrase.

"AFTER ALL!"

BY M. B.

Has thy day been long and drear?
  Have thy nights grown faint with pain?
Seems the future filled with fear,
  And thy toiling all in vain?
Ah! 'Tis but the fate of all!
  Shadows come, and sunbeams fly;
Cares and crosses, great and small,
  Fade the cheek and dim the eye.
Yet we trust, whate'er befall,
  God is watching—after all!

Courage, then! Through night and storm
  Bear thy burden cheerfully!
Pure in heart, and stout of arm,
  Glorious victory thou shalt see.
Not a moment pause; nor sigh
  Over faded joys so fond;
Buried let the dead past lie,
  Hope for blessings still beyond.
Trust and hope, whate'er befall,
  God will keep thee—after all!

Round the Fire.

BY ESTOLL.

I KNOW I'm not much more than a schoolboy—I don't pretend to be anything more—but that's no reason why I should be supposed to have the hide of a buffalo and the eyes of a bat! And you girls may say [what you like—I call it real bad form of Miss Constance Grey to look me straight in the face and say she was so sorry her card was full, and the next moment, with me standing beside her, to hand up the precious bit of pasteboard to Captain Douglas and let him scribble his initials half a dozen times on it!"

Thus our schoolboy brother Herbert, aged fifteen, expressed himself with regard to a snub he had received and resented at a dance the night before, while we, a merry group of young people, were seated round the fire discussing the looks, dresses, flirtations, and general deportment of our neighbors who had attended the ball.

"Not," continued Bertie, heedless of our sympathizing remarks and with a superb toss of his little curly head—"not that I cared a straw whether the girl danced with me or not!"

"Of course not, dear boy," Isabel, our eldest, languidly assented; "we all understand that. And now what say you all to a truce to scandal? Suppose, for a change, some one tells a good ghost-story? The hour, circumstances, and season are most propitious."

"By all means," cried our youngest sister, Flo—"a capital idea! Let us have a delightful shivery ghost-story with no ridiculous endings spoiling all the mystery! Here, you, Jack dear, as a man of experience, open the entertainment for us!"

"Well," said Jack reflectively, "I can't say I have had much experience in the spectral line myself, but there's a fellow in the regiment who certainly had a visitation in that way. Rather curious occurrence, by Jove! If you would care for the facts, I don't mind distressing myself a bit to amuse you. I had the story told me by the principal himself—and Greenhalgh is a sober matter-of-fact sort of fellow whose word is not lightly to be doubted. In the year eighteen hundred and seventy this said Reginald Augustus Stanton Greenhalgh entered the holy and delightful state of matrimony. We did not blame him, for a prettier or jollier little woman than Mrs. Reggie is not often to be met. She accompanied Greenhalgh to India with the regiment, but, her health failing, she had to return to England. Her husband remained two years longer, then, becoming home sick, obtained leave to rejoin the depot. He fondly hoped to be able to spend that Christmas in connubial felicity, but somehow everything combined to defeat his wishes. One thing after another delayed him, and on the most festive day of the year his vessel was steaming up the Red Sea. They were a very convivial lot on board; but somehow Greenhalgh was not in the best of health or spirits, and one night he left an uproarious supper-table and lay down in his quiet dimly-lit cabin. He had been dozing uneasily for an hour or so, when he felt the air around his pillow becoming strangely cold, and, opening his eyes, he saw his wife standing at the foot of his berth, dressed in a white diaphanous kind of garment, her soft dark eyes fixed on his face with a mournful look. With a stifled cry, he sprang towards her, and, lo, she was gone—gone completely! Cold perspiration trickled down his face; through his port-hole he gazed out blankly at the silent sea, and murmured drearily the words—'Dead—dead—dead! Never, never more in this world shall I see your sunny face or hear your silvery laugh, my darling little girl that I loved so!'"

At this touching point Jack and his regimental friend Mr. Hamilton showed signs of emotion.

"I beg your pardon," continued Jack, recovering himself and seeming slightly ashamed of his sensibility—"I really did not think the circumstance—would make such an impression upon me. I am not a good hand at telling a story. Well, the next morning Greenhalgh told some of the fellows about this strange apparition. Of course they only laughed at him—said it was all imagination, and chaffed him until he himself was a bit hopeful and sceptical. On landing however, he was off to London before the other fellows had their traps off the vessel. Well, that evening he arrived at his wife's little nest in Kensington, and found her—you'll hardly believe it—found her——"

"Dead!" we cried, in a subdued chorus.

"Dead!" repeated Jack, with sudden vivacity. "Bless your hearts—no! Alive, and as well as any of you here this evening!"

A puzzled silence fell upon the company at this most unexpected denouement. When we recovered speech, our voices were raised in an expostulatory chorus.

"But what in the name of goodness was the meaning of the apparition then?"

"I don't know," answered Jack. "Do you, Hamilton?"

"Can't say I do," responded Hamilton—"unless it was one of those psychical phenomena that have puzzled philosophers from time immemorial."

"Of course, girls," continued Jack placidly, "if you wish me to give you an opinion of the matter in a private and confidential manner, I should say that the spectral appearance is simply explained by the fact of Greenhalgh's having partaken of cold plum-pudding at supper."

"You wretched boy!" cried Flo, with vicious energy. "I will never ask you again for any of your precious experiences!"

Yes, we had been awfully sold; and an ominous silence fell upon the company, while Jack and his friend sat and laughed aggravatingly at our discomfiture.

Then Isabel turned her pretty head towards the culprit and Mr. Hamilton—with whom, by-the-bye, she had danced five times in succession the night before—and thanked her brother courteously for his interesting and spirited anecdote and his highly successful effort to amuse the company.

More sarcastic speeches followed; and Mrs. Greenhalgh's disappointing and inconsiderate conduct might have caused a serious break in our pleasant evening had not good-natured cousin Edward quelled the rising storm in this wise.

"I say, young people, apropos of ghosts and genuine horrors, do you know that there is a rumor afloat in Lancashire that Miss Nellie Adair, that noisy and athletic-looking young lady who forms a member of our family group to-night, once actually tackled a pair of real life-sized burglars with the address of one of the oldest hands in the force, and saved her family from a midnight tragedy?"

At this announcement all eyes were turned towards a shy, quiet little girl of about seventeen who was sitting in a distant corner near the school-friend Flo, with whom she was spending the Christmas holidays. The girl colored up to the roots of her hair at thus being called attention to, and made a disclaimer; but it was of no use—we insisted on her recounting the adventure in detail.

Order being proclaimed, Miss Nellie began to tell of her adventure, after an apologetical preface and an earnest assurance to the company that, however circumstantial evidence might be in her favor, she was really the most useless good-for-nothing little coward that could well be imagined.

"It was about this time two years ago," she said, in a sweet quivering voice, "that I came home for the holidays one awfully dark cold night. Hail was falling fiercely and a terrific gale blowing as I drove from the station. I need hardly say how glad I felt when the hall door was thrown open and a flood of warm light streamed out into the dark night. I quickly entered the hall, and then saw some great commotion going on. All the servants were huddled together at one end, and papa and my brothers, looking very excited, were talking angrily to a dark sullen-looking man who, I understood, had entered our house as footman about a fortnight before. Papa welcomed me only by laying his hand upon my head.

"'No, no,' said he, evidently going on with his remarks, which my appearance had interrupted—'not one instant longer shall you stay, you incorrigible rascal! The county gaol is the only place fit to hold you, and there, I warrant me, you'll find yourself soon enough without my assistance!'"

"My father paused to take breath. The man looked up, and said, in a subdued voice—

"'Sir, this is Christmastide—a fierce, biting winter night. I have nowhere to go; the last train has left for London. Consider what you are doing!'

"But my father was inexorable.

"'Hail, rain, or snow, I care not!' he said. 'Leave here you shall this very night! Not one word more!'

"The man gave him a dark look and, without another word, strode out into the darkness. I followed my brother into the dining-room.

"'Oh Will,' I whispered, I wish papa had not driven that poor man out on such a night! Whatever his fault, could he not have been allowed to remain till morning?'

"'No, child! You know nothing about it," answered Will. 'The servants refused to stay another night under the same roof with him. My father was quite right.'

"Nothing more was said on the subject. My cousins and some friends arrived the next day, and we had such a merry week of it that I had almost forgotten the unpleasant occurrence.

"One night towards the end of January all our guests had left, and papa and my brothers were going off to a dinner-party in the neighborhood, and I was to be left alone. However, before setting off, Will said to me—

"'I dare say you'll find it a bit lonely moping by yourself. I know you like sensation; so here's something jolly to keep up your spirits during the witching hours of night.'

"He gave me one of those Christmas annuals that are full of what Flo calls real downright shivery ghost-stories. Will called it, 'jolly,' yet it had a certain fascination, and I read on till after eleven o'clock; then, knowing papa would be displeased if he found me up, I mounted the stairs to prepare for bed, humming a tune to keep up my spirits as I went.

"Having looked well under my bed and made a careful survey of all the corners, cupboards, and presses in my room, I jumped into bed and with one determined puff extinguished my candle, then covered my head with the clothes, and soon fell asleep. But, alas, my slumbers were haunted, and one spectre in the traditional shroud advanced so menacingly towards me that I woke up with a start! I could not go to sleep again, but lay thinking of the wretched stories I had been reading, and wondering if papa was home, what the time was, and how long it would be before daylight. I longed for something to break the deathly stillness.

"Suddenly a muffled sound broke on my ear from the passage outside my door—not the sound of a fearless football, the honest click of a lock or the ordinary slam of a door; it was the noise of a cautious stealthy movement. I jumped noiselessly out of bed, wrapped myself in a dark dressing-gown, and peered out into the passage. It was as dark and still as the grave. I stood for nearly a minute motionless, then my eyes grew accustomed to the blackness. I could discern the door of a small closet where the housemaid kept her brushes and dusters; but not a sound more did I hear.

"I was about to return to bed, blaming myself for being the victim of nervousness, when, without the least preparation, the door opposite opened softly and the head and shoulders of a man protruded. He peered cautiously up and down the passage, and then retired into the closet without seeing me. My eyes nearly started out of my head with surprise and fear, but I did not cry out or fly from the spot. I gazed stupidly and silently before me for a moment, then, in a spasmodic fit of heroism, darted across the passage and bolted the closet door.

"I breathed again. The robber was as secure now as if he were within the walls of a prison. A few steps more and I should be safe in Will's room, and the whole household would be alarmed in less than five minutes. Alas, alas! I had just turned to fly, when I felt somebody else crouching close beside me, and a hoarse whisper fell upon my ears—

"'Hold yer confounded noise, yer clumsy fool, and follow me!'

"I obeyed, blindly groping my way after the figure, my mind blank with fright and my throat dry and parched, unable to produce the faintest articulate sound.

"Instinct told me how the case stood. This man, seeing the outline of my figure in the dark dressing-gown, had taken me for his comrade whom I had locked up in the cupboard; and I felt that, if he found out his mistake before I could summon assistance, I should be a dead girl. He crept along, seeming to know his way well, and turned to the left towards the turreted room at the end of the house where papa always slept and where he kept the family jewels and some valuable plate. If I could follow undiscovered as far as that room, thought I, perhaps Heaven would give me power to arouse papa while the thief was securing the valuables. Oh, what a walk that was! Never, never shall I forget it!

"Papa never locked his door for fear of fire; so we—the burglar and I—easily entered the room. Here my companion produced a small shaded lamp which threw a faint light over the bed, but not sufficient to awake even the lightest sleeper. I could perfectly discern my father's figure—he was lying on his back, with the bed-clothes a little thrown off his shoulders.

"'No bungling now; keep close with the gag!' said the intruder to me, in a very low whisper, without however looking up, for he was busy altering the light.

"At that instant I recognized the wicked footman whom my father had turned out of the house, and at once felt sure that he meant murder—cruel cold-blooded murder—and nothing else. The room and all the furniture seemed to float round me. Oh, what should I do if my senses failed me entirely? I clutched wildly at my throat to try to force out a cry, but failed. I endeavored to get to the bed, but the man stood between me and it, and I know that, if I touched him without awaking my father, I should be quieted, probably for ever, by one blow of his huge fist. He bent over the bed, and I saw a sharp steel blade glittering in his hand; then a voiceless prayer for help went up from my heart to Heaven. As if in answer, the sleeper stirred faintly; and the other paused a few seconds, passed his hand lightly over the blade, and motioned me closer to his side. I slipped behind a wardrobe which stood near to the bed.

"Everything was ready; the victim was breathing peacefully. Again the ruffian raised his cruel steady hand; a few seconds more and my dear father's heart would have ceased to beat for ever in this world. My hands unclenched themselves, the blood flowed back into my veins; with all my might I pushed the heavy wardrobe on top of the crouching wretch. He fell, and one of the doors of the wardrobe, flying open, struck him, cut open his forehead, and he lay struggling and groaning on the floor.

"My father sprang up with a shout of 'Who's there? What's the matter?' Then I recovered my voice and, with an effort, got out the word 'Thieves!'

"I don't remember much more. I just heard them all hurrying into the room, and the shrieks and struggles of the ruffian while they were disarming and strapping him. Somebody slipped a pair of papa's slippers on my feet, somebody else poured brandy down my throat, and my brother Will carried me back down the now noisy passages into the own room. Then a circumstance which seemed to me to have occurred nearly a week before came into my mind.

"'Not in here, please,' I whispered; 'there's another in Martha's cupboard! I had forgotten him!'

"Well, the two housebreakers were tried at the assizes, and, as several other convictions were proved against them, they were both committed for fourteen years."

Just as Nellie finished her story tea was being handed round, and Jack rose to his feet cup in hand and proposed her health in a neat and appropriate speech.

SENSITIVENESS TO PAIN.—Generally speaking, the more civilised and refined races are to a greater degree sensitive to pain than barbarous and civilised races. This was well and conclusively proved by Dr. Feikin in a series of carefully planned experiments which he made upon Arabs, Negroes, and Europeans. The stoical fortitude of the Arabs he considered due to peculiar native characteristics, of which mental repression, self-control, and dogged endurance were the leading features. Most savage tribes show an utter indifference to pain, a New Zealander having been known to chop off his great toes so that he might put on a pair of boots which had been given to him.

A Waif's Gratitude.

BY E. L. D.

"WELL, Good-night, my darling! for you're not quite strong yet from your illness; and I, of all men, must take care of you, both as lover and physician; and only a fortnight to our marriage."

A lover to be proud of too, a tall, handsome fellow of five or six and thirty, and as clever and daring as he was handsome; whilst she was a pretty, slender creature, scarcely over twenty, who had refused a young and very rich suitor, for the love of Ernest Aubrey. Thereby the rejected man was transformed into a deadly enemy, and had even vowed his rival should never have Rose Morland—which threat the doctor, with a reckless and contemptuous laugh, had stigmatized as "melodramatic rubbish," and anyhow, would find he (Aubrey) was a buccaneer enough fellow to deal with, as he hadn't knocked about the world for nothing—which was true. The doctor, tall and strong, and daring, was an ugly customer to an enemy, though tender as a woman to suffering or weakness.

"But you will be a little careful, Ernest," the girl whispered, as he kissed her again and again; "Leicester said it so fiercely—he meant mischief, and you are so reckless."

"My dearest! he is a contemptible sneak, and you mustn't be anxious for me; but of course I'll be reasonably careful, for your precious sake. One more kiss, my rose without a thorn."

Which meant half a dozen, or he would not have been a lover. Then he took leave of Mrs. Morland, and went away. His own house being only in the next street, he soon reached his doorstep, latchkey in hand.

"Hullo! what's this?" he exclaimed suddenly, as a small figure started up from the depth of the portico; "why, by Jove! —a City Arab! What's the matter, little chap?" added Dr. Aubrey, kindly, as the small urchin clutched his left hand convulsively, with a sob of excitement.

"Oh, you've come at last, sir," almost sobbed the boy; "and it is yerself what was so good to me when I got runned over last year, and—and that's why I've been a watchin' for yer, sir, to stop them chaps for murderin, of yer."

"Stop a minute, my lad," said the doctor, quickly, opening the door so that the full light from the hall-lamp should fall on the boy. "What does all this mean? Run over?—Oh, yes; I do believe it's the same face. I remember. So you are Robin, and you wanted to see me, eh?"

"Yes, sir," with intense eagerness; "'cause you was good to me and——"

"Never mind that, my boy. Come inside, and tell me what you want to say."

Yes, Ernest Aubrey remembered now, that a year ago, just as he neared his own door, a little unkempt City Arab was knocked over by a pair of horses in a break, and must have been cruelly injured, but that he himself had leaped forward, caught the restive animals' bridles, and then carried the child into his house, dressed his cut head, and kept him for a few days till he was well; and then got him in a place as errand boy in Islington, where the lad's mother lived. Since then he had lost sight of Robin—and now here he was, with an ugly word on his lips—murder!

Aubrey led the boy into the library, turned up the gas, and stirred the fire, to which he pulled up a cane chair.

"Sit down there, Robin," he said, in the old kind way the child evidently remembered with such singularly vivid gratitude. "Now tell me why you waited outside for me, and what you mean by 'they,' and 'murder.' Where's your mother, though?"

"She's gone away, please, sir," said Robin, his intelligent eyes full of wonder, gazing over the room, a palace to him. "She used to beat me, so it's no matter. I runned away. I goes of errands, and 'olds horses, and sich like; and a cove in our court lets me doss down somewheres about his place, so as I run errands for his missus an' himself. That's Paradise Court, sir, near 'Olborn, yer know."

"H'm, yes, I know of it," returned the doctor; "and a regular thieves' den it is, Robin. I'm very sorry you've got into such bad company, my lads."

"I ain't a prig, sir!" cried Robin, eagerly; "'deed I ain't though they wants me to; but I wouldn't, never, 'cos you was good to me. And when yer got me that there place at old Jerry's, sir, I promised yer, out an' out, I'd be honest. An' I 'ave, though yer wouldn't b'lieve the likes o' me in course."

"I am not at all sure of that, my little man," said Aubrey, gravely, curiously touched, his keen, dark eyes covertly watching the child's eager intelligent face the whole time, noting every change of expression, studying this specimen of humanity.

And few men knew human nature and the world better than the doctor did; he knew that in nearly all beings, especially in youth, there is some measure of good, however much crusted over, if only the right touch be found to reach it; and that one with the masses must always be, more or less, an individual touch, a personal influence. Here, plainly, a strong feeling of gratitude to himself still held sway in the waif's heart, though how long that hold would last against a continuance of very adverse influences, was, doubtless, a measurable tether.

"Yes, Robin, I believe you," was the doctor's ultimatum; and the child's whole thin little face lighted up with joy. "And now tell me your story—why you found your way out here to me so late, and so forth."

"Please, sir, it wor ten when I comed, but they sez you was out, but they'd send if it was a bad case, if not, would I come ag'in. I sez, yes, but I only watched till yer comed back, d'ye see, 'cos I was bound to tell yer to-night, sir, else them blackguards 'd murder yer to-morrer night."

"Ah, not an easy job, I reckon," remarked the buccaneer doctor, an odd suspicion flashing into his mind. "Well, Robin?"

The little Arab, who small though he was, was about fourteen, told his story now; to a deeply attentive and silent listener.

At present, he said, Paradise Court was the head centre of a gang of whom a certain Red Jem and Bill Sayers, known, as Snapdragon, were the leaders. About a fortnight ago Robin has seen these two "sneak into the crib" with a third person, roughly dressed, closely muffled up, and despite disguise, "I, twigged he was a gentry-cove, sir," Robin put it. Being curious, he crept down and listened. He could catch that the gentry-cove was arranging with the two ruffians to decoy and murder some one. The gentleman was to take a furnished house in London, go there with Jem and Snapdragon, one evening to be settled, and send a telegram for the victim-elect. All three men were to be masked with crape, and armed. The victim was to be shown to a bedroom to the supposed invalid, and then despatched, the body was to be carried to a deep cellar and buried in quicklime. The "cove" was to pay £1,000 down for the job.

"I watched every night, sir, to find out more," continued the shrewd boy, "'cos the p'lice would ha' said that was gammon, p'raps. Yesterday, Jem, he sez to me, would I earn a sov, by taking of a letter to a 'ouse in a few days. 'You bet,' says I, twigging at once; 'where is it, neim?' I says. But he said as how he didn't know till this evenin', and he'd give me the letter in time to leave it. In course, sir, I watched close, till I see the same chap come after dark, then I creeps and listens; he pays them down two hundred sovs, sure as sure, then he says, 'The place I've took is 6, Dahlia Grove, Chelsea, and the letter is to be sent at 10.30 to Dr. E. Aubrey, at the address on the letter. Then I slipped off and runned here to stay yer going. Oh, yer won't go, sir, will yer?" cried the boy, almost frantically; "they'll murder you, they will!"

"By Heaven, but they won't though, my lad!" said the doctor, getting up, his black eyes flashing. "I know who the scoundrel is, and, thanks to you, his game is up. Look here, Robin, you have saved my life, and I shall make you my charge for the future; you are a good, grateful child, and deserve reward."

He paused a minute to regain self-mastery; then went to the sideboard and brought out bread and cheese, bidding Robin come and eat, for he looked hungry.

Needless to say that Robin obeyed to the full, and then Aubrey said, quietly:

"Now we are going in a cab to Scotland Yard, as I intend to arrange for us to go to-morrow and catch all the rascals red-handed. No, don't be frightened for me, my boy, I shall be safe enough. I've knocked about no end, and go armed at all points. Come along."

He lowered the gas, took the child's hand, and went out once more into the street. A hansom soon transported the oddly-matched couple to Scotland Yard, where the doctor asked for the chief at present in charge.

The constable he asked went to inquire, but soon returned with a message that Mr. —— was engaged, but Inspector Hawkins would see the gentleman.

"That will do as well," answered the doctor, and he and his little charge was conducted to an official-looking room, where the inspector named rose to receive the visitors.

"Ah," he said, with a smile of recognition, "what can I do for you, Dr. Aubrey?"

"Case of 'Tom Pool,' eh?" said the doctor, amused. "Know me, then?"

"Oh, yes, sir, very well, indeed, by sight and name. Is it a case of robbery, sir?" added Mr. Hawkins, glancing at the boy, who stood by the doctor's chair, clinging fast to his hand—the little Arab was not quite happy in Scotland Yard.

"Why, no; a plot to murder me," returned Aubrey, coolly. "But thanks to this little lad's gratitude for a trifling matter a year ago, I am forewarned, and so fore-armed."

"Whew!" went the offier; "that's serious, sir. Plot to murder; do you know who?"

"Oh, yes. The principal rascal is a young gentleman named Leicester; the subordinates hired by him to aid him are two burglars, known, Robin here tells me, as Red Jem and Bill the Snapdragon."

"Those two fellows!" exclaimed the inspector. "Why, they are wanted, this six months, for desperate burglaries. They're about the worst of a gang. I'd give a good deal to have my grip on that pair."

"All right, my friend," answered Aubrey; "you can have your wish, then, to-morrow night, and I mine. We can catch the two like rats in a trap, which is my intention as much as yours. I'll tell you the plot shortly, and we can arrange our plans."

"I am all attention, sir," said the delighted official.

Dr. Aubrey explained the position simply and shortly. "No, new tale," he added; "and the plot was none so very odd, either, in this nineteenth century." Then he told, how, on his return to the house, he had found this lad, Robin Lear, whose story he repeated in substance.

"Sounds like truth, certainly, sir," said Hawkins, meditatively, with another sharp look at Robin. "You think he's genuine, I suppose?"

"Sure of it," answered Dr. Aubrey. "I'm not very easily deceived."

"No, I shouldn't think you was, sir," said the officer, significantly. "Look here, youngster"—this to Robin—"see that door? Go into the inner room there till I call you. I want to speak to this gentleman."

Robin obeyed at once, though he released his protector's hand with reluctance;

When that inner door was shut, the inspector said:

"It's best not to let him hear our plans, sir, as he'll have to go back to Paradise Court, and we can't trust what the lad might let out by chance, or get pumped, especially if those rascals got the least suspicion he has peached."

"And you doubt his fidelity, too?"

"No, I don't, sir; one does sometimes find these odd cases; and the poor little beggar, from your account, don't seem to be a thief, nor of actual criminal parentage. Nor can I see any motive, exactly, for his coming to you, except the one he says."

"Nor I. Well, of course, he'll have to go back to his old crib to-night, be seen as usual to-morrow, and bring me the letter."

"Yes, sir; and then, undoubtedly, the safest course for you is to stop at home."

"Not if I know it," said the other, with a flash in the handsome black eyes. "There would be no evidence to convict that fellow, Leicester, unless I do go and get in. He shall be taken red-handed, by Heaven! I can't feel my future wife's life to be safe, if he is at large, after the malignant revenge now betrayed."

"It's what I expected you would say, sir," said the inspector, smiling; "but still, though I should find my job much more sure—there's a terrible risk of getting a shot, even as we follow you, in the moment the door is opened."

"Oh, hang risk! I'll chance that," said the other, recklessly. "I've seen too much of bullets to mind them——"

"But Miss Morland, sir——"

"She has to be a doctor's wife, my friend; so she mustn't be timid for me—whether of danger from a bullet, or infection. Nor will she. Of this, of course, she won't know anything till it's over."

"Very well, sir. Then I and four of my men will be concealed by eleven, near No. 6, Dahlia Grove (I know the place well); and you stop your cab at the corner. I'll join you. Directly they open the house door to your ring, I and my men will rush in with you, and capture the whole three."

They then arranged a few more details, and then Robin was recalled, to receive full instructions. Then Dr. Aubrey bade the inspector "good-night," and went away with his small friend.

"By Jove!" said Hawkins to himself; "what a dare-devil that Dr. Aubrey is!"

* * * * * *

So the arrangements for "trapping the rats" were made to the entire satisfaction of both parties, and the next day Dr. Aubrey went about his work as cool and unconcerned as if no such thing as jealousy, revenge, and murder existed at all, and waited for him for night; only the hours went too slowly—the man's blood was up, and as to risk and danger to himself, the dare-devil absolutely sprang to it in any form.

Not one word did he say to his young fiancee—he would tell her to-morrow, when the miscreants were in custody. Of course he went over in the evening, but left at ten. Perhaps, unconsciously, he held his treasure closer at parting, but that was all. He had not been at home ten minutes when there was a sharp ring at the front door bell, and a minute after George, his page, brought in a letter.

"Please, sir, the bearer is to wait. It's the same little urchin that came last evening."

"Ah, is it?" The doctor rapidly opened and glanced at the letter. "Tell him to fetch a hansom, George. I shan't be in till late—a patient from a distance has sent for me."

When Robin and the cab came, Ernest Aubrey was "quite ready," as he grimly said to himself. Robin gazed up so wistfully that the doctor smiled—understanding exactly.

"You're very anxious about my safety, my lad, eh? Well, jump in too, then; only you must stop quite quiet in the cab till I come back to you."

"Yes, sir! Oh, sir, you is good to take me along of yer!"

"Where to, please sir?" asked cabby, down the tray.

"Dahlia Grove, Chelsea. Stop at the corner, and wait there. Drive fast."

They were off at once, but the doctor sat with folded arms, and his straight brows knitted, silent; nor did Robin venture a word, he was in a tremor of excitement and fear for his fearless companion's safety—if only the doctor would not have gone at all!

The cab stopped at length at the corner of Dahlia Grove, a long, semi-suburban road in the outskirts of Chelsea—a very "shady" sort of road, where the landlords and neighbors let, and took houses, and asked few questions, day or night. Aubrey sprang out, and turned to the driver.

"Wait here," he said; "it will be worth your while. The lad is to remain inside."

Then he moved slowly down the road, and paused by the corner house, The next moment a man in a plain dark gray suit stepped from under the porch (which all the villas here had) and was at the doctor's side, with a quiet:

"All right, sir. My men are hidden close by No. 6, and directly the door is opened to you, we're ready to force our way with you. I'll pass on, sir, and hide before you knock. It's the end—the sixth house."

"All right."

Aubrey strode on as the detective inspector vanished ahead under a portico. It was now much past eleven, and most of the houses darkened; the inmates either not back yet, or shuttered in, or in bed But No. 6 had the hall lamp alight, for it shone through the fanlight.

The doctor rang sharply, as a medical man hastily summoned to sudden illness would naturally do.

There was a heavy step inside, the door was opened a trifle on the chain, and a plainly falsetto voice, meant to sound feminine, demanded timidly:

"Is it you, sir?"

"Yes, Dr. Aubrey, my good girl," said the doctor. He could have laughed at the absurd farce—the affected caution of the miscreant played into the other's hands, for as the door was closed to loose the chain, the inspector and his four men stole to the foot of the steps, ready. The door was opened, the doctor set his foot on the threshold, and suddenly dashed the door back with one push from his powerful hand. There was a glimpse of a square hall, of three masked men—a shout of

savage execration, a rush in of the police, and instantly a desperate struggle.

But one man instantly fired at Aubrey as the tall figure flung off the first assailant into the arms of a constable, but the doctor swerved, and springing forward, caught Leicester by the throat; and after a short, desperate struggle, hurled him to the ground.

"You young villian!" he said, through his teeth; "your game is played out, and you are taken red-handed. Here's your chief prisoner, Hawkins—half senseless, I reckon."

Aubrey swung round to lend a strong hand to the other captives; but Red Jem and Bill were overpowered and handcuffed already, and now were unmasked.

"Curse you," growled the fellow, savagely; "it's that limb of a Rob, what's done this 'ere."

"By ——, the gentry cove shan't get off, neither," from Jem; "he's——"

"Shut up, you," said a constable, sharply, "you and Bill's been wanted an age, before this job."

Leicester now, with assistance, got up, a figure too contemptibly degraded for even pity—sullen, savage rage, fear, hate all depicted on his once fair face, handcuffs on his wrists, a prisoner for attempted murder.

Inspector Hawkins at once sent one of his men to call up two four-wheelers, which he had in waiting at the lower end of the Grove, and then said to Aubrey:

"We needn't keep you any longer, sir, now; if you and the lad will be at the police-court to-morrow at ten, please."

"Very well," answered the doctor; "are any of your men hurt?—because——"

"No, sir, thank you, only some bruises; but that bullet has torn your coat sleeve."

"Ah, that's a pity—spoilt a good coat," said the doctor, coolly. "Well, good-night, then,"

"Good-night, sir."

* * * * * *

When Rose opened the breakfast-room door the next morning, at half-past eight, there stood the tall figure of her lover.

"Ernest—you!" she cried, joyously, and sprang to his open arms.

"My darling, you didn't expect me so soon?" said Aubrey, smiling, as he stooped to take his love's hand, and only released her as familiar voices were heard outside.

"What you, my dear fellow? Well you're no laggard lover, by Jove," was Mr. Morland's laughing greeting, as he and his wife shook hands with the younger man.

"Not I," said he, with a flash in his dark eyes, as Rose colored and laughed, half-shy, wholly proud of her handsome lover; "but I had a double reason for such an early intrusion this morning."

"Breakfast here, of course?" put in Mrs. Morland.

"Oh, no, thanks, I've had that nearly an hour ago; but whilst you folks have yours, I want to tell you a small matter which might startle my child here," dropping his hand tenderly on Rose's shoulder, "if she heard it suddenly elsewhere, before seeing me alive and unhurt."

"Ernest!"

"There, pale as a ghost already," said he, laughing. "Mustn't be a coward about the buccaneer doctor, you know, my dear, or you'll be gray before I am."

And, certainly, there was only raven-black to be seen yet on the fine head.

"Have a cup of coffee, for company's sake, anyhow," said Mrs. Morland. "There's your chair beside Rose. Now tell us the news, please."

Scarcely, perhaps, quite what they had imagined, except Rose, who was, at least, not surprised. She trembled at the thought of Aubrey's narrow escape from that shot—which he treated with careless contempt—but, when the story was told, she, womanlike, blazed out on behalf of the man she loved.

"The dastardly assassin," she said, with flashing eyes. "The base coward, too. Oh, I am glad he is taken; so glad. He deserves no mercy, no pity from you nor the law."

"He'll get none, my dear, from me, by Heaven!" said Ernest, grimly. "For, so long as he was at large, I should never have been quite easy about you. I should have made an hospital case of the scoundrel, soon; so it's long odds for him—crippled for life or whole limbs in Portland."

"And that poor, grateful little Arab," Rose said, eagerly. "What good there must be in him, and just like you to——"

"Chut, child; nonsense! The child made a lot out of nothing," interposed the doctor, his swarthy cheek reddening for a moment, as he rose. "And I must be off, as Robin has to meet me at the police-court. I've packed him off an hour ago, under my George's care, to the baths, a barber's, and a clothier's. Ha, ha, I guess the little chap will say, like the old Irishwoman in the workhouse, 'Yes, thank your honor, I'm horrid clane.'"

"Ha, ha; now, honor bright," said Mr. Morland, "where did that waif pass last night?"

The doctor looked at him so comically, flushed a little, and then laughed outright.

"Well, by Jove, the child had saved my life, hadn't he? I camped him down, in a huge blanket, in my dressing-room; he slept like ten tops, I tell you."

"What are you going to do with him?" asks Mrs. Morland, smiling.

"I've hardly thought, yet. I reckon I had best get him into an Industrial school, at first. Now I'm off; but I'll look in later and tell how things have gone. One kiss, my Rose. Oh, never mind these old married folks," as he took it, laughingly, and went off.

"Rose, my child," said Mrs. Morland, "you have won a treasure, more fine than finest gold."

"I know it," the girl said, under her breath. "Oh, if I were but worthy of such a heart! If I ever could be!"

"Don't you let Ernest hear that, though," said Mrs. Morland, smiling. "Come, dear, you and I have to go shopping, Saturday week isn't far off, you know."

At the police-court, the magistrate heard the main points of the evidence, the charge being, of course, the grave one of conspiracy to murder.

The magistrate remanded the case for a week, refused all bail for Leicester, and told Robin Bear that he had behaved very well, and seemed to be a very intelligent boy.

"He seems to have no parents," said the magistrate. "Who can be bound over for his appearance as a witness next Wednesday, unless you, Dr. Aubrey?"

"I will be responsible for him, Sir Henry," said the doctor, as he felt the small hand clinging tightly to his own. "He will be under my care in future."

"I am truly glad to hear that, Dr. Aubrey. I would have sent an officer with the child to the workhouse for a time."

The case was over now, and the doctor and his new charge—the latter in a kind of bewilderment—got away to a cab, and home.

Robin was consigned, pro. tem., to the elderly housekeeper and George, and the doctor went off to his patients, whilst presently the evening papers came out with big headlines—"Extraordinary charge of attempt to murder an eminent physician."

As yet Dr. Aubrey had only stated that the motive of the attempted crime was jealousy, as he himself was engaged to a lady who had refused the prisoner, Leicester.

The trial, later on, ended, of course, in the conviction of all three prisoners, and heavy sentences; so heavy, that Robin often says, with complacent security on his beloved master's account:

"That cove won't be out of the stone-jug till I'm a man, and a-driving master and missus' carriage my own self."

Which ambition will doubtless one day be attained, for Robin, when home from day-school, is the most invaluable factotum in the doctor's house; and when, later, a baby son was born, the little one had no more devoted a slave, indoors or out, than grateful-hearted Robin, the some-time waif.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A Yale College correspondent says that the fad for collecting relics of their student days is fast becoming a mania with the veteran graduates of "old Eli." Until a few years ago it was confined to sawing off branches of trees on the campus or taking a rail from the fences, but now all old doors covered with names are eagerly sought for by graduates.

The Burgomaster of Brussels has ordered the formation of a cyclist corps in connection with the local fire brigade, for the purpose of carrying the first aid to the persons in danger through an outbreak. The men are already being drilled every day, the machines selected being tricycles, upon which they carry a coil of rope, a hatchet and other articles useful in cases of emergency.

A Paris beggar has succeeded in making a comfortable living by hanging himself. He would choose a tree near where young children were playing. String himself up, and groan to attract their attention, so that they would run for help. He would be cut down and restored, and a letter in his pocket would explain his attempted suicide by a statement of his destitution. He knew how to attach the noose so as to avoid strangulation."

Among the proposed novel exhibits at the coming Widwinter Fair in San Francisco is a mammoth Scales of Justice. The figure of Justice is 150 feet high and the cross beam of the scales she holds in her hand is 300 feet long. Each scale is a car capable of holding 50 people, who may be carried to a height of 288 feet. The whole arrangement is to be manipulated by machinery placed beneath the base of the statue.

A useful little contrivance has just been patented, which should quickly glide—for it takes the form of a snake—into public favor. It is a little black silk and jet headed reptile that clings round an umbrella, and holds it secure without the aid of the ancient elastic band and button. The great advantage of the "umbrella snake" is that it enables even the most unpractised hand to fold up an umbrella without effort and with great neatness. It fits any umbrella, and has no button to come off, and gives a finish to the umbrella which will be especially appreciated by ladies.

A most singular occurrance happened in a recent fox hunt in Grafton county, New Hampshire. A fox was started, and, after a lively chase, Reynard, being closely pressed, ran into a cleft in some rocks. A foxhound was immediately after the fox and entered the fissure at its heels, with such velocity that he stuck fast in a narrow place. Seeing the dog could not release himself, the fox turned and went out where it came in, squeezing over or under the dog in some way. The hound was wedged so tightly in the narrow space that the hunters were unable to release him for a day or two.

The people of Arizona are enthusiastic over a gigantic irrigation scheme, which is hoped to enhance the attractiveness of that State. The plan is to build a big steel dam in the Grand Canon of the Colorado river of sufficient strength to resist any pressure of summer floods, part of the water thus confined to be used to operate turbine wheels to drive pumping machinery for elevating the remainder to the plain above. The supply of water in the Colorado is unfailing, and many of the most extensive valleys in the Territory could be irrigated by such a system. The scheme is generally said to be entirely feasible.

PATENTS.

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Our Young Folks.

HADDOCK'S LAST CHANCE.

BY MAGGIE BROWNE.

"THEN I give you one chance more; but remember, only one."

The words were spoken sternly, and the boy to whom they were spoken for once in his life looked serious as he left the room, for he know that the master meant what he said.

Yet he wasn't really a very bad boy. He never meant to get into mischief, but somehow, scarcely a day passed without his being in some trouble; scarcely a day passed without his being sent up to the head master; and the master was getting weary of scolding and punishing.

Of course he was popular with the boys, and as he entered the playground he was greeted with shouts of—

"Haddock! here, I want you."

"Well, Haddock, what did you get this time?"

"Come along, Haddock. We've been waiting for you."

He was called "Haddock" by the boys, thought it was not his real name, but instead of objecting to it, he seemed to prefer it.

But for once Haddock took no notice of the boys' calls. He stood quite still, with his hands thrust into his pockets, thinking of the master's words: "I will give you one chance more," and then Haddock sighed.

"Now then, Haddock, are you coming to have a game? Don't stand there looking like a fish out of water."

Still Haddock did not move. Then a big boy came up to him and whispered something to him.

Haddock shook his head.

"Can't old fellow," he said. "I haven't got any myself. I'm hard up."

"Then you ask 'Madame' to let me pay another day," said the big boy.

"Can't do that, either," said Haddock. "It's against my principles. Is Madame there? I want to speak to her."

And in a minute he was across the playground and beside the big school gates.

By the gate stood a small boy. He was dressed in white, with a baker's cap on his head, and across his shoulders was hung a tray, on which were set out sticks of sweet meat.

As Haddock came up to him the boy was waiting patiently for customers, and was eating one of his own sugar-sticks.

"Where is Madame?" asked Haddock.

"Not come," said the boy, who understand very little English. He had only been in England a few weeks, and this was the first time he had come without his mother—"Madame," as the boys called her—to sell the sweets outside the school. Usually the old lady stood at the big gates, and her sweets were so good that she had many customers among the boys.

"Madame not come?" repeated Haddock. Then his eyes began to twinkle, and he began to laugh. All his good resolutions were forgotten in a minute.

"Boys!" he shouted, "boys, come and look at Frenchy eating his own sweets! Shall we make him eat the lot?"

There was a shout of glee from the boys. A look of terror came into the French boy's face. He did not understand all that was said, but he guessed that shout meant mischief.

Haddock saw that look of terror.

"Wait a minute," he said to the boys, who were crowding round the little French boy, "I know something better than that. I'll be Madame, and sell the sweets."

He pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and tied it over his head, then before the little French boy had time to realise what was going to happen, his apron was tied round Haddock's shoulders, and his tray hung from Haddock's neck. He began talking and shouting in his own language, but Haddock took no notice of him. He was busy selling the sweets.

"Two pennies the stick this morning, young gentlemans," said Haddock, imitating Madame's voice, and curtseying as Madame did. "Ah! I see, the fat young gentlemans over there will buy six sticks. He loves my sweets. Give me your money, my fine young gentlemans."

The little French boy watched him for a few minutes, then finding that nobody took any notice of him, that he was pushed aside as the boys crowded round Haddock, he burst out crying, and ran off to fetch Madame.

The boys, meantime, were entering into the fun, buying sweets, clearing the tray which hung round Haddock's neck, and filling the little money-box rapidly with coppers.

The crowd increased, until nearly all the boys were gathered round Haddock, and he was mounted on another boy's back, the better to be heard and seen.

"So few of my excellent sweets are left, young gentlemans," said Haddock, "that we will sell the remainder by auction."

He changed his manner quickly, and became in a minute an energetic auctioneer.

"Now then, who'll buy? A fine stick of the finest peppermint, made of the finest pepper and the finest mint. Two-pence, you say; too little, too little. Ah! somebody over there who has a better notion of what's what says three-pence. Very well; going, going——"

There was a movement on the outer edge of the crowd, and Haddock suddenly felt himself tipped off the boy's back on to the ground. When he looked up to see what was the matter, the first person he saw was Madame, and behind her were the head master and the little French boy.

The boys drew back, and as the master waved his hand they moved away.

"Follow me!" said the master sternly, though he found it hard work to keep back a smile at the comical figure before him.

But, to his astonishment, Madame, who had been busily talking to the little French boy, instead of following him, began to laugh and to talk to him eagerly.

"It is all right, sir," she said. "A leetle meestake. My poor Alphonse only frightened. He not understand the young gentlemans. I know them. I know this young gentlemans—he so good, only full of mischief. He will not harm me or my leetle boy, he so good."

"So good!" repeated the head master, looking at Haddock, who was getting redder and redder in the face, looking more miserable and wretched when someone was praising him than he had ever done when he was being scolded.

"He a good kind young gentlemans," said Madame. "He make the other young gentlemans pay me, and one day he save my whole tray full of sweets——"

Haddock interrupted her quickly.

"Hush, Madame!" he said; "the master doesn't want to hear all that nonsense."

Then he turned to the head master. "Please, sir, I only did it for a joke, and I'm sorry. I've got the money for her—more money than she would have got." And he handed the round box to Madame, who began to count the money with many cries of astonishment and delight. "But you said you would only give me one more chance. Do give me another, and I'll try."

"Forgive the young gentlemans this time," said Madame.

The master looked puzzled. He was beginning to wonder if perhaps there was something better in the boy than he had found out.

"Settle with Madame, and then come and speak to me in the study," he said to Haddock.

Haddock spent a long time in the study, and he was kept in that afternoon, but from that time he was less often in mischief. He and the master seemed to understand one another better. At any rate, the master gave him another chance.

DECISION.—While every care should be taken to teach a child how to decide wisely, he should be taught with equal assiduity that when the time arrives he must make up his mind with promptness and resolution, and abide by the consequences. It is a very poor training that allows him to change his mind with every fancy, to take what he has refused, and to give up what he has chosen. It cannot be thus in manhood, and he will enter upon it quite unprepared for its stern decrees. Equally bad is that authority which forbids all choice on the child's part, that decides every detail and orders all the minutiæ of his life. If he is brought up in absolute dependence on the will of another, and never allowed to decide anything for himself, it is not strange that the task should prove too much for him in after-life. No freedom in youth often means no decision in manhood.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS.—Much harm is unwittingly done by drawing comparisons between brothers and sisters. Of course every variety of difference exists between them and may be freely acknowledged; but directly they are made the pivot on which praise or blame is turned envy, jealousy, and even hatred arise. In this way are seeds of enmity sown between those who should be dearest friends, and the harvest often continues even to mature life. The virtue that the parent has hoped to stimulate in this way is of short duration. Such competition is of necessity temporary, and, when it passes away, the motive for exertion is withdrawn. Even were this not so, no gain could compensate for the loss of that fraternal affection which binds the family together, and which should be cherished as one of the choicest blessings.

THE OLD ALLIGATOR'S ADVICE.

BY E. C.

ON the shores of a river in Florida dwelt a young alligator. He was a handsome little fellow, for he was black, with gay yellow streaks across him.

All day he lay on the shore, basking in the sun's rays, and now and then taking a swim in the water, which was quite warm from the heat of the sun. He often lay sleepily watching the large alligators as they swam past him, and envied them much, for his great wish was to be full-grown.

One day, as he lay on the bank, he saw a fine old alligator swimming towards him; only his great head was to be seen, and a long trail of water all round and behind him.

As he came nearer he silently looked at the little alligator with his cold gray eyes, and then dragged himself slowly out of the water on to the land.

"Well, little one," he said, as he stretched himself out in the sun, "why do you look at me so sadly?"

"I am thinking how nice it would be to be big and fine like you," answered the little alligator.

"Little friend, you had much better be contented as you are. I am old, and it is not so nice to be old."

"But it must be fine to be grown to one's full size, to be strong and fearless, and to wear a thick scaly hide that nothing can harm," said the little alligator, his eyes shining.

"Take my advice, and be happy, little one. When you are full grown there may be dangers that you do not dream of now. Listen, and I will tell you a little tale.

"When I was young, I longed, like you, to be full-grown, and at last, after many years, my wish was fulfilled: I was fine, and large, and very strong.

"One day I swam far down the river, rejoicing in my strength: all at once, round a bend in the river, I saw a boat coming towards me. I swam to one side to avoid it, when suddenly, crack! went a pistol-shot close to me, then another and another; they pierced my sides below my scaly hide.

"With a great effort I turned and made for the shore. More shots were fired, but I managed to reach it, drag myself painfully up the bank, and creep among a tangle of bushes. For days I lay in great pain, unable to move, and thought I should never get well; but after a long time I grew strong again, and at once set off for my home up the river; and glad I was to reach it in safety.

"Little friend, think over what I have said; take my advice, and be content."

With that the old alligator closed his eyes and remained motionless.

The little alligator sat gazing at him for a long while, then he began to creep slowly down the bank, and as he glided off into the water murmured to himself—

"I suppose he's right. I will take his advice, and be happy."

PAUL!—A short time since, at one of the weekly dances at which Alphonso XIII., Spain's small king, is the host, a pretty girl of eleven years won his little Spanish heart, and he chose her repeatedly for a partner. At the end of the dance the children, as usual, began embracing and wishing each other "Good-bye." Alphonso made straight for his diminutive favorite with open arms. She shrank away coquettishly, and refuse even to let him kiss her cheek. Alphonso looked her over, turned his back, and walked away. On the next occasion the little girl was present, but the king did not dance with her. When the ball closed however, she went to him and turned her cheek to be kissed. Alphonso however took a step backward and stretched out his hand that she might kiss it, exclaiming, "I am your king."

ONLY two women in England have the right to append the mystic letters M. F. H. to their names. The one is Mrs. Cheape, who is master of the Hentley pack, with her daughter as whipper-in, while the Countess of Paris is master of the Woodnorton Hunt. Last season Lady Ileene Hastings officiated for a time as master of a pack of foxhounds in Ireland, acting as the substitute for her brother, the Earl of Huntingdon.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Electric railroads traverse 7500 miles of track in this country.

A medical writer estimates that 5 per cent. of dog bites result fatally.

A foot of newly fallen snow changes into only an inch of water when melted.

Nearly 10,000 men were enlisted in the United States Army during the past year.

Nearly 15 per cent. of the present population of the United States are of foreign birth.

There are 150 papers published in the interests of anarchy, most of which appear in Spain.

An enterprising thief of Albany, N. Y., stole an overcoat from a clothing store dummy.

The hog is said to be the only living animal that is proof against the bites of venomous snakes.

In many parts of California quail pick up grain with the domestic chicken and roost in orchard trees.

The first suspension bridges ever built were made in China 2000 years ago, being constructed of iron chains.

Alexandre Battu, the Parisian violoncellist, recently paid $16,000 for a Stradivarius violin dated 1714.

Iron visiting cards, 40 of which placed one on another make only a tenth of an inch, are a novelty in Germany.

Some man who is good on figures says that about 10,000,000 tubers can be raised from a single potato in 10 years.

A gentleman must kiss every lady to whom he may be introduced in Paraguay. It is the custom of the country.

Mrs. Josephine Harroll died on her husband's grave in the cemetery at Henderson, Kentucky, a few days ago.

A Louisville auctioneer was knocked down the other day by a man to whom he had knocked down a worthless watch for $9.

A Chicago fakir recently sold some gorgeous bottles of cologne which, when opened, were found to contain plain water.

Drivers and owners of horses in Boston have made a protest against the use of salt in the streets of that city during the winter.

The inherent hue of water is said to be blueness. Distilled water has been shown to be almost exactly of the same tint as a solution of Prussian blue.

The "official" scale of prices of a Missouri paper are as follows: One year—75 eggs, 14 pounds of steak, two bushels of potatoes, or one-half cord of wood.

Great Britain has a longer seacoast line than any other nation in Europe—7715 miles; with Italy second, 2479 miles. Russia stands third and France fourth.

Service at a church at Livingston, Alabama, was broken up on a recent Sunday by the preacher and congregation rushing out to fight a fire in the neighborhood.

The latest trick to catch the patronage of the public, adopted by several shopkeepers in New York and Brooklyn, is to run free stages or give free car tickets to shoppers.

Paul Bennevue, who began his career as secretary to Dumas, pere, and varied it as diplomat, editor, publisher, politician and banker, is ending it in a New Hampshire poorhouse.

A farmer in Northern Delaware who planted a large grove of young chestnut trees a year ago, went out to look at them the other day, and found that they had all been uprooted and carried off.

In Texas they are debating whether farmers would not better live in villages, as they do in Germany and Switzerland, driving out to their fields roundabout. This would relieve the monotony of farm life.

Lawson Tait, the English surgeon, is authority for the statement that sugar, in certain fruits, becomes changed into alcohol during the process of decay, and that wasps have been known to get intoxicated thereon.

A gold toilet service of 30 pieces, given to the Khedive of Egypt as a wedding present from the bride's mother, has his monogram in diamonds on each piece, 1300 of the precious stones having been used in the settings.

The Electrical Review says: The extent to which the electric light is used in New York city may be judged by the fact that more incandescent lights are supplied by one illuminating company in New York than are used in the whole city of London.

Only princes and princesses of the blood are exempt from taxation in England, and the Duke of Teck, though father of the future Queen, being regarded as a sort of foreign duke of minor quality, has been called upon to pay the dog tax on his 60 or 80 canine pets.

A romantic tale is reported from Mt. Vernon, Washington. Farmer Johnson fell in love with a neighbor's daughter, who refused his offer of marriage. Johnson then went home and committed suicide, leaving all his property, amounting to about $300, to the girl.

GOOD-BYE!

BY W. W. LORD.

The day is dark with rain and sleet,
And "good-bye" said must be,
And whether we ever shall meet again,
Is all unknown to you and me.

Though years may keep us far apart,
Our faith will never die;
And some time again the light will shine
From a cloudless summer sky.

RECREATIONS OF GREAT MEN.

Recreation is as necessary in the economy of life as work. There is profound philosophy in the nursery lines about all work and no play. Mr. Gladstone's recreations take the form of writing pamphlets on theological controversy, or felling trees; and no professed wood-cutter is more expert in laying prostrate a mighty oak than the right honorable gentleman.

Chemistry engrosses the leisure moments of his political opponent, Lord Salisbury. Carteret, another English statesman, when driven from office, "retired laughing," says Macaulay, "to his books and bottle." Fox found relief from political work in his loved Greek authors, as did the late Lord Derby, the Rupert of debate. Talleyrand in the intervals of ministerial work played whist. Peiresc, a French antiquary, found his amusement amongst his medals and intaglios; the Abbe de Maroles with his prints, of which he collected about one hundred thousand, which are now in the National Museum of Paris. Rohault, a Cartesian philosopher of the seventeenth century, wandered from shop to shop to observe the mechanics labor. Goldsmith tells us of a famous painter whose whole delight, during his confinement in prison for debt, consisted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricature. King Louis XIII. of France spent much of his time in catching small birds or making jets-d'eau with quills.

It is said of George Herbert that "the one delight of his life in the way of recreation was music, setting and singing his own hymns and anthems to viol and lute." Many learned men have found recreation in the same way. A bye-work of this kind always provides a delightful rest or change.

Bishop Warburton confessed that music was always a necessity to him when engaged in intellectual labor. Addison says: "A man that has a taste for music, painting or architecture, is like one that has another sense when compared with such as have no relish of these arts." Milton loved music, and used to play upon an organ. Carlyle tells us that "the main recreations" of Frederick the Great "were music and the converse of well-informed friendly men"—two things of which, we may remark, George Eliot was also passionately fond.

Dr. Johnson, it would seem, had no sympathy with those who thus amused themselves. A lady after performing with the most brilliant execution a sonata on the pianoforte in the presence of the great Doctor, turning to him, took the liberty of asking him if he was fond of music. "No, madam," replied the philosopher; "but of all noises, I think music is the least disagreeable." He would agree with the poet who says:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
are sweeter.

The favorite recreation of Pope's leisure hours was the society of painters. Nothing was more agreeable to the poet than to spent an occasional evening with his friend Kneller, who, to use the words of Thackeray, "bragged more, spelt worse, and painted better, than any artist of his day."

Warburton tells an amusing anecdote of the two friends. Mr. Pope was with Sir Godfrey Kneller one day when his nephew, a Guinea trader, came in. "Nephew," said Sir Godfrey, "you have the honor of seeing the two greatest men in the world." "I don't know how great you may be," said the Guinea man, "but I don't like your looks. I have often bought a man much better than both of you together, all muscles and bones, for ten guineas."

Another great painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, used to amuse himself in his last days in his house in Leicester Square with a little tame bird, which, like the favorite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille, often served to while away a lonely hour. But this proved a fleeting pleasure, for one summer morning, the window of the chamber being by accident left open, the little favorite took flight, and was irrevocably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square and neighborhood in the fruitless endeavor to regain it.

The favorite recreations of the late Field marshal Count Von Moltke were chess and whist, which he rarely missed playing after dinner. The Count was an authority on the culture of roses; and at Kreisau, where he spent most of his time after his retirement from active service, he possessed one of the finest and most unique collections of roses in Germany.

Sir William Temple relaxed his mind from the affairs of state by clipping his apricots or cultivating his tulips. Gardening was an exercise in which he much indulged. An epicurean himself, he says in his famous "Essay on Gardens:" "Epicurus passed his life wholly in his garden. There he studied, there he exercised, there he taught his philosophy; and indeed," he goes on to say, "no other sort of abode seems to contribute so much to both the tranquillity of mind and indolence of body which he made his chief ends."

Other great men, as well as Epicurus and his disciple, Sir William, have loved gardening without, however, finding it to contribute to that bodily indolence of which the philosopher speaks.

What a sturdy specimen of manhood was Martin Luther, for example, and yet gardening was a favorite amusement with him. Writing to a friend to procure him some seeds, he says: "While Satan rages, I will laugh at him, and enjoy my Creator in the garden."

An ingenious writer has observed that "a garden just accommodates itself to the perambulations of a scholar, who would perhaps rather wish his walks abridged than extended."

Grains of Gold.

Doing good is a better occupation than digging gold.

The man who never thinks is drifting toward destruction.

There are a great many cheerful givers—givers of advice.

Are you trying to keep the promises made to loved ones in heaven?

There are two sides to every question, but bigotry never sees but one.

Some men wait for opportunities, but others go to work and make them.

Poverty destroys pride; it is difficult for an empty bag to stand upright.

The best preparation for doing great things is to be faithful in little ones.

Irresolute people let their soup get cold between the plate and the mouth.

If love could have her way, there would never be another tear shed on earth.

The greatest blockhead is the one whose mistakes never teach him anything.

The man who has the courage to admit that he has been in the wrong is not a coward.

If we could only know how much people have suffered, how easy it would be to love them.

A philosopher is a man who does not try to argue with others until he knows he can down them.

Cheerfulness is also an excellent wearing quality. It has been called the bright weather of the heart.

It will not do to think that because we have overcome great temptations, it is not worth while to guard against little ones.

Let your charitable gifts be anonymous gifts. These have the double advantage of suppressing at once ingratitude and abuse.

Femininities.

Salt shakers, tiny, individual ones, are shown in the shape of a button mushroom.

There are more people who wish to be loved than there are who are willing to love.

Those born in December should wear the turquoise, which ensures success and prosperity in love.

A Chicago newspaper publishes a story about a Missouri girl who, it declares, has a foot 15 inches long.

A man is always more truthful in his opinion of his second baby than of his first. Woman call it more brutal.

A farmer living near Three Lakes, in Forest county, Wisconsin, recently sold his wife to a man for $10. The woman is said to have raised no objection to the bargain.

When stewing fruit or, in fact, when cooking anything in an open vessel, do not leave the spoon in if you wish to have it boil quickly. The spoon carries a portion of the heat off into the air.

A new way to serve raw oysters is in tall, handled tumblers. A dressing of pepper and salt, lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce goes with them, and they are picked out with the long oyster fork.

Clara: "You dined at the Mulberry's last New Year's night, didn't you? What did they have for dinner?" Maude: "Haven't the least idea. You know Mrs. Mulberry had on a dress that I had never seen before."

Mrs. Blumer: "I'm afraid that young man in the parlor is trying to kiss Clara. I thought I heard her cry out."

Blumer: "Heavens! Let me go in at once."

Mrs. Blumer: "You can't get in, my dear. She has locked the door."

"Mary, do you think the work is too hard for you here?"

"No, ma'am."

"Then why are you leaving?"

"It's the style of hats you buy, ma'am; I don't look well in none of them."

In an Auckland, New Zealand, paper a girl advertises for a situation to take charge of a laundry or dairy. She can cook, and understands housekeeping, and adds, "None but a respectable mistress who wishes to have her servant in uninterrupted charge need apply."

In the matter of parasols the Duchess of York is very rich. They number sixty, and all of these, or nearly all, were made to order and are covered with the same materials as the gowns. The lighter of the parasols are covered with silk, which is then draped with lace or chiffon, or loops of ribbon.

As shown by the report of Secretary Hoke Smith, the United States pension list contains the names of fifteen widows of veterans of the war of the Revolution and two surviving daughters of those veterans. They were all living on the 30th of June last, for their pensions had been regularly drawn up to that date.

The movement against child labor is making gratifying progress in various States, and particularly in Massachusetts. The past year the police found only 233 children under 14 years of age at work in Bay State factories in violation of law, a decided decrease from the previous year, when seven times as many were found.

The following two Southern families are probably unrivalled. Rev. Asa South, of Sullivan county, Tennessee, is 70 years old and the father of 33 living children. The other family is that of Moses Williams, colored, who lives near Fayetteville, North Carolina. He has been married twice, and is said to possess 43 children, all but five of whom are girls.

"One deplorable result of excessive meat eating," says Mrs. Ernest Hart in The Hospital, "is the ill temper which is said to be a chronic complaint in England. In less meat-eating France urbanity is the rule; in fish and rice eating Japan harsh words are unknown, and an exquisite politeness to one another prevails, even among the children who play together in the streets."

One thing noticeable in the decoration of the Queen's drawing-room at Balmoral is the great number of statuettes of the Queen's children. A very pretty group represents the Princess Beatrice, Prince Leopold and their dog, Wardie. A statuette represents the Queen on horseback, wearing the long riding-skirt which was the fashion in her day; but her gown is low-necked and short-sleeved, and she wears round her neck the collar of the Order of the Garter. The curtains, chairs, and carpets of the room are all of the Victorian tartan.

It is exceedingly curious to notice how numerous as well as how varied are the pet superstitions of ladies who, on all other subjects, are perfectly sane and free from mental vagaries of every kind. Not long since a young lady was seen walking on a prominent street in New York. When approaching two or more women she would go toward the wall or approach the curbstone; when two or more men approached she would, in such cases as the sex seemed not to involve rudeness, walk between them. She had a superstition, which is shared by many of her sex, that while it is good luck to separate two men, it is bad luck to part a couple of women.

Masculinities.

The breath of suspicion is generally scented with cloves.

Willard A. Lucas, of Poquetannuck, Connecticut, wears an artificial hand made of aluminum.

Men don't look too coquettish on bicycles, notwithstanding the arch manner of their backs.

The motto of a business man in Erie county, New York, is: "All things come to him who hustles while he waits."

A soft lead pencil on a creaky hinge will take the creak out, but nothing will uncreak a pair of Sunday boots.

A bridegroom is like a car-coupler. He is the most insignificant object in sight, but the thing can't go on without him.

The man who wrote "one-half the world doesn't know how the other half lives," never could have lived in a small country town.

Deacon William M. Mitchell, of Hartford, Conn., who died recently at the age of 85 years, had only 21 birthdays. He was born on February 29, 1808.

An indignant Iowa husband advertises for a cash register machine that will show the number of times his wife changes her mind every 24 hours.

Probably one of the lightest married couples in the country are Mr. and Mrs. William Hill, of Elk Park, N. C., whose combined weight is but 159 pounds.

The Empress of Austria not only smokes from 50 to 60 Turkish cigarettes a day, but during the course of the evening also gets through several strong cigars.

After Miss Mary Clancey had been acquitted of forgery by a Memphis, Tenn., jury the other day, she caused a sensation by publicly hugging the entire jury.

"It always pays a man in my business to take plenty of time," murmured the burglar softly to himself, gently dumping the third tray of watches into his bag.

There are two colored officers in the regular army, Lieutenants J. H. Alexander and Charles Young, of the Ninth Cavalry, which is composed of colored troops.

On a small wager George A. Lee, of Litchfield, Minn., smoked 50 cigars in 11 hours' time one day lately. The shortest time taken to consume one cigar was six minutes.

Paul B. Du Chaillu believes with Professor Garner that monkeys have a language of their own, and says he has heard native negroes in Africa imitating streaks of their chatter.

Young minister: "I've been praying for you a long time, Miss Dora."

Dora, astonished: "Why didn't you let me know it? I'd have been yours after the first prayer."

The parasol is a very ancient article. The Assyrians, the Egyptians and the Persians all carried them, as shades against the sun, for fashionable adornment and in religious ceremonies.

Much surprise was caused at Lincoln, Nebraska, recently, by Rev. Simon Roundtree, a colored Baptist preacher, aged 99 years, getting married for the eighth time. His latest wife is 35 years old.

A remarkable pointer is owned by John Abberger, of Minneola, Florida. The dog had 1700 quail, 2 deer and quite a number of wild turkeys killed over it between the 1st of November, 1902, and February 1, 1903.

The defence made by Conrad Hempfling in a New York police court, recently, was that "I've been a henpecked husband a long time and I got tired of it; I hadn't pluck enough to strike her and so I got drunk."

Thompson Chandler, a farmer, of Lyons, N. Y., is the father of two boys, one of them 8 years old, the other a prosperous business man, aged 69, of Vineland, N. J., who, in turn, has a son of 48, who is a bank director.

A hawk was shot by Albert Newlin, of Laurenceburg, Indiana, the other day. When he went to pick the body up the bird's mate attacked him with beak and wing, and finally bore off the body of its dead mate in triumph.

A treasury official says that a man had better have a live rattlesnake in his pocket than a counterfeit dollar, carried as a pocket piece. It is contrary to law, and the official cites several instances where much trouble has been caused.

A pair of English sparrows are believed to have been the cause of a small fire which originated in the cornice of the Girls' High School, at Louisville, Kentucky, one day lately. One of the professors thinks that the conflagration was caused by a match in the birds' nest that became dry and ignited in some mysterious way.

In an article on the present status of electricity, Arthur V. Abbott estimates that the 500 electric roads in the country now use 7500 miles of track, with 17,000 cars, requiring engines of 100,000 horse power. The companies are capitalized for $125,000,000. In addition to this Mr. Abbott figures that we have over 400,000 miles of telephone lines in service, with 100,000 miles of underground cable.

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

Frills of some kind, gathered, knife or accordion-plaited, are seen on nearly every bodice worn, much to the disgust of stout figures. Many lapels or revers are worn, all of which are wide and short, though some are double and all are of a contrasting material, velvet, velveteen, satin or bengaline, or edged with a narrow jet, ribbon, etc. Sometimes the revers forms a sleeve-cap, the two rather resembling a shoulder-cape, which is a very fashionable effect. Deep ruffles are placed around armholes, with a second frill as a bertha, and a new bertha or fichu has the plaited frill wider on the shoulders, then tapering narrower as the frill descends to the waistline, back and front. A shirred guimpe above a circular bertha, which has been described many times in previous numbers, is much fancied in Paris. If of the dress material, such accessories require an edging, as a frill of lace, band of insertion, narrow passementerie; and it is said we will see short, fluffy fringe thus used. When of a second fabric the trimming is not really necessary.

We have been shown quite an elegant choice of new wraps. One is a pelerine mantle of black gros grain silk, composed of a double cape gathered onto a small yoke, and finished in front with two long lapels. The whole is fully trimmed with black chantilly lace and edged around the neck with a full ruche.

A lovely three-quarter length mantle in black plush is shown in some of the stores; it has a high V-shaped shoulder cape edged with feather ruching, and deep collar to correspond. Pointed jet ornaments down the back.

A rather magnificent semi-loose jacket is in black cloth with black velvet sleeves. The black silk lining is set off in front on the turned back flaps and collar with a Vandyke band of sparkling embroidery and a row of jetted guimpe, which is outlined with a thick ruche of feather trimming.

Some of the fur ornaments brought out for millinery purposes are comical enough to repay inspection, even were they not among the novelties. Fur roses and other flowers look quite as artistic as they could be expected to; quills are made in queer imitation of featherwork.

A square-top quill of beaver is edged all around with the new featherwork that looks like chenille, or soft, thick-pile silk plush. A bonnet of this feather plush in dark, rich brown has a trimming of uncut velvet, a clear canary shade, and bee-hive buttons of steel. It is a charming combination of new ideas.

Four of the tiny ermine tails are stuck upright around a white aigrette in a clou of seal. Each funny little tail seems wholly independent of all the rest, and the result is a most aggressive ornament, if it be not too great a liberty with the King's English to call it so.

As fantastic a design as any rational mind well could conceive is a roll of fur coiled round and round, like a coil of hair, and stuck all over with jet spangles. Two bird claws of jet beadwork are provided for the nondescript creation. If women like this style of decorative work, it is well to have it so perfect of its kind. It is beyond criticism.

Flounces with French heme or simply closely gathered are showing innumerable headings, and are not put on plainly, but waved round the skirt. Double skirts are a feature in dresses. The upper one falls just below the knee. Bodices get shorter-waisted as the months go on, and belts are wider.

Hitherto we have been content to trim marriage gowns with virginal white or silver; now, however, gold is beginning to be used: on satin in fine lines of gold thread, and broad bands of Venetian white silk passementerie outlined with gold.

In one case a beautiful girl, of noble lineage, elected to be married in the exact facsimile of her great-grandmother's wedding-dress. The china silk was woven for her from the dress displayed in the old family portrait. The ground was cream, but there was a faint floral pattern which meandered all over it in many colors. The fashion of the gown was a sacque, completely concealing the outlines of the figure. It fell in heavy pleats back and front, showing the throat; broad bands of the silk fell from the shoulders to the hem of the long skirt, the sleeves were of rare old lace to the elbow, and the rarest Mechlin trimmed the neck and front. The bobbin net veil, as thin as could be, was edged with the same. It was an ideal garment.

Shot silks, shot woollens, shot ribbon, shot gauzes, shot velvets, all these distinguish our current fashions; and very wonderful are the colorings. Plain materials are being trimmed with changeante fabrics, as the French call them. No one nowadays could say that it is easy to give a sure opinion or definition as to colors.

Trimmings are put on in circles, or else spiral-fashion round the skirt. Dresses of woolen material are mostly trimmed with bias bands of velvet or fancy galloons.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Bread-Making.—A correspondent writes as follows: "I have lately adopted a new way in bread making, which has given me the best satisfaction. Make a hole in the middle of your pan of flour, pour in the required amount of yeast and milk, and cover it over slightly with dry flour. If this is done at night, you will find in the morning a light foamy mass which I stir down once or twice before kneading for the bread tins. I think the bread nicer for the ingredients being mixed so slowly.

To Purify Water.—A tablespoonful of pulverized alum sprinkled into a hogshead of water (the water stirred at the same time) will, after a few hours, by precipitating to the bottom the impure particles, so purify it, that it will be found to possess nearly all the freshness and clearness of the finest spring water. A pailful, containing four gallons, may be thoroughly purified by a single teaspoonful of the alum.

To Make Potato Starch.—Grate six medium-sized potatoes and mix thoroughly with one gallon of water; strain through a coarse towel, let settle, drain off the water, and turn on another gallon of clear water, and let settle again; drain again, put in an earthen dish, and set in a warm place (not too warm) to dry. Use same as corn-starch for starching clothes.

Towels should be Thoroughly Dried.—Many person iron towels, fold them and put them away before they are thoroughly dry. This is an error, and sometimes leads to results not expected. In their damp condition there is a mold which forms on them called oidium, one variety of which causes numerous skin diseases.

To Save Soap.—The addition of three-quarters of an ounce of borax to a pound of soap, melted in without boiling, makes a saving of one-half in the cost of soap, and three-fourths the labor of washing, and improves the whiteness of the fabrics; besides, the usual caustic effect is removed, and the hands are left with a peculiar soft and silky feeling, leaving nothing more to be desired by the most ambitious washerwoman.

To Whiten Yellow Linen.—Linen garments which have become yellow from time, may be whitened by being boiled in a lather made of milk and pure white soap, a pound of the latter to a gallon to the former. After the boiling process the linen should be twice rinsed, a little blue being added to the last water used.

Alum in Starch.—For starching muslins, ginghams, and calicoes, dissolve a piece of alum the size of a shellbark, for every pint of starch, and add to it. By so doing the colors will keep bright for a long time, which is very desirable when dresses must be often washed, and the cost is but a trifle.

Garlic Vinegar.—To make garlic vinegar pare and slice a dozen cloves of garlic, put them in a preserving jar with one pint of vinegar, cover and set away for two weeks, then strain into a bottle. One teaspoonful of this vinegar added to a potato salad gives it a delicate flavor of garlic.

Stale Fish.—Never buy stale fish. It will look flabby and dark, and will have an unpleasant odor. Fresh fish is firm, the eyes are full and rather bright, and the odor, while it is always fishy, will not be disagreeable.

To move claret stains from a tablecloth put salt on immediately and thickly over the spot. Rinse in cold water before washing. If not entirely removed apply lemon juice and dry in the sun.

To render the colors of cotton fabric permanent, dissolve three gills of salt in four quarts of water; put the calico in while hot, and leave it till cold; it will not fade by subsequent washing.

For frying always put a pound or two of fat in the pan. This is no waste, as the same fat can be used over and over by pouring it through a strainer into a crock for the purpose.

Much of the heavy cake and bread is the result of the oven door being banged when closed. Close the door as gently as possible. Nearly everyone opens it gently enough.

In baking bread or rolls put a saucepan of boiling water into the oven. The steam will keep the crust smooth and tender.

Butter put into clean pots and well surrounded with charcoal will keep good for twelve months.

For bread and pastry have an oven that will in five minutes turn a piece of paper dark brown.

A spoonful of kerosene oil put into cold starch will prevent the iron from sticking.

Without doubt the most wonderful remedy for pain is Salvation Oil. It sells for 25c.

THE GODDESS OF THE ADRIATIC.

AN ITALIAN LEGEND OF FRANCAVILLA.

Franchina was the Goddess of the Adriatic. She lived in a palace of sea-shells in the depths of the sea. The moon with its silvery light gleamed on her way, and when the sun was about to appear, Franchina would close herself up in her home.

Who could tell the loveliness of Franchina? The beauty of all the world's fair creatures combined could not form one of the innumerable endowments of the Goddess of the Adriatic.

Franchina, above others, was transparent. What creature of this earth is transparent?

The Goddess never slept. We often throw ourselves down like dead. The repose of Franchina consisted in rocking herself in a bed of corals. Then when she desired to adorn herself, by a motion that she would make there came cockles and other shell-fish carrying pearls and sea-grass. And whenever she wanted to recline her head, the sea-foam went and said—

"I am your pillow!"

The sun had never seen the loveliness of Franchina. Its rays penetrated in the water, yes, but only to a certain depth; never to the palace of shells. Her fairness, then, could only be admired by the moon. And the moon one day, meeting the sun, narrated all the marvels of the Goddess.

The sun mused.

"How can I see Franchina?"

After pondering deeply over the question he resolved to go to the highest mountain to visit the Queen of the Clouds. Seeing her he said—

"I shall multiply your riches, but you must do me a favor."

"What can I do for you?"

"To-morrow morning, when I appear, you must make me find the sea covered with clouds, so as to resemble night."

"Done!" the queen replied.

He then looked over a high cliff and recommended himself to the King of the Four Winds.

"Why doesn't Your Majesty do me a favor?"

"Command!"

"In the morning," the sun said, "when I rise, you must, in an instant, put to flight all the clouds that veil the sea."

"You shall be obeyed," answered the king.

As night approached Franchina commenced to stroll up and down, and finding much pleasure in it, she didn't perceive that the day was dawning.

The clouds were dense on the surface of the water, and especially around Franchina. Meanwhile she, thinking that it was yet night, continued her fun.

The King of the Four Winds arrived the same moment that the sun appeared and cleared the sea of all the clouds. Franchina didn't have time to reach her palace. The sun hastened to put a crown of light on her head and on her shoulders a mantle interlaced with his rays.

"You shall be my bride," he said. "To the sea you shall never return. Remain forever on this beach. I shall stay from you only the night; but, even then, you shall be in my thoughts. Every morning I shall return to kiss your brow, breast and feet. New life for you; new life for me!"

All the people hurried to see Franchina and remained astonished by the richness and abundance of light. Here they established themselves, around the Goddess, and so originated the town of Franchina, which by time and fancy was called Francavilla, and which to-day is as flourishing as ever. This beautiful town on the coast of Italy, is the magnet of attraction to many tourists from all over the world, while its inhabitants are always ever-ready to relate to the strangers the legend of the Goddess of the Adriatic.

P. FINOCCHIO.

WHY DOES IT PUFF?—The cough, or puff, of a railway engine is due to the abrupt emission of waste steam up the chimney. When moving slowly the coughs can, of course, be heard following each other quite distinctly, but when speed is put on the puffs come out one after the other much more rapidly, and when eighteen coughs a second are produced they cannot be separately distinguished by the ear. A locomotive running at the rate of nearly seventy miles an hour gives out twenty puffs of steam every second—that is, ten for each of its two cylinders.

Many prominent citizens and officials recommend Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup.

WHAT HE PROMISED IN ORDER TO WIN HER.—She: "You will love me always?"

He: "Passionately, my darling!"

She: "And you will never cease to love me?"

He: "Never, my darling!"

She: "And you will save your money?"

He: "Every penny!"

She: "And you will never speak harshly to me?"

He: "Never!"

She: "And you will give up all your bad habits?"

He: "Every one of them!"

She: "And you will get along with mamma?"

He: "Yes."

She: "And papa?"

He: "Yes."

She: "And you will always do just what mamma wants you to do?"

He: "Yes."

She: "And just what papa wants you to do?"

He: "Yes."

She: "And just what I want you to do?"

He: "Of course."

She: "Well, I will be yours; but I fear I am making an awful mistake."

Through Cars to New Orleans.

Among the many important improvements in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad train service is the addition of through Pullman Sleeping Cars from New York to New Orleans, via Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and the famous Shenandoah Valley route, passing through Roanoke, Knoxville, Chattanooga and Birmingham. The train leaves New York daily at 5.00 P. M.; Philadelphia, 12th and Market Sts., 7 22 P. M, and 24th and Chestnut Sts., 7.38 P. M., reaching Roanoke at 7.50 A. M.; Knoxville, 3.52 P. M.; Chattanooga, 8.00 P. M.; Birmingham, 11.13 A. M., and New Orleans, 12 45 P. M.

This train is very handsomely appointed, being vestibuled throughout, and has Dining Car service New York to Chattanooga. At Washington a Pullman Sleeping Car, which runs through to Memphis, is added to the train.

MOTIVE POWER.—What the world must have for its welfare and improvement is some motive power which shall bring out the faculties of men and women and develop them to the utmost. What that motive shall be must depend upon the mental and moral condition which society has attained. Competition is such a power at the present time; but it is neither the highest nor the lowest. It is far superior to the compulsory force which once ruled the slave or the serf and drew unwilling labor out of them. It is far inferior to that love of excellence which influences some few people to put forth their very best efforts, and which commands the admiration of all, even of those who do not respond to it themselves. Such as it however, it occupies the vantage-ground at the present time, and, with the large majority, it is the moving force which brings forth capacity, energy, industry, perseverance, courage, success.

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—AND—

Blonde and Brunette,

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

726 Sansom St., Phila., Pa.

ORIGINALITY IN SIGN BOARDS.—There are many curious sign-boards in this country, but we are a long way behind the people of Holland in this respect. Signs are used there for other than business purposes. For examples, the retired tradesman uses a sign on his private residence to inform all and sundry that he is content with the good things which have fallen to his lot. For this purpose such sentiments as "My satisfaction," "Sociability and friendship within," "Without care," "My pleasure and life," "Big enough," "All my own," "Ease and comfort," and a host of others are painted in large letters across the fronts of houses.

When anyone is ill it is the rule—not the exception, as in this country—to exhibit a notice, in which the symptoms and progress of the invalid are daily recorded for the information of friends and relations, or, in fact, anyone who feels interested in the case. If death ensuees, then a mourning sign is placed in a prominent position; and should a new baby arrive, a dainty little placard of red satin and white lace is attached to one of the outer doorposts.

The most curious in the way of Dutch signs is probably that which intimates that the proprietor of an establishment has "Fire and water for sale." At first sight this might appear rather unintelligible to an Englishman; but on inquiry it will be discovered that many of the poorer inhabitants who cannot afford to keep a fire in the house going all day are in the habit of purchasing red-hot turf to warm themselves when their day's is over, or hot water to make tea or coffee for their evening meal.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM.—Man is a creature of cast-iron methods; woman adapts herself to circumstances.

A man refuses to drive a nail unless he has a hammer. A woman does not hesitate to use a poker, or the heel of a shoe, or the back of a brush.

Man thinks it absolutely necessary to have a corkscrew to draw a cork. Woman will gouge it out with her scissors, or a knife, or a button-hook. If it won't come out it will go down, and, after all, the contents of the bottle are what are wanted.

A man regards a razor as consecrated to one calling. A woman has a higher opinion of its versatility, and uses it to sharpen pencils. This office surreptitiously performed leads her husband to say malignant things about razors and their makers.

When a man writes he demands pomp and circumstance, and as wide an orbit as one of the planets. Pen, ink, and paper must be "just so;" and he shuts up the whole family in a Tower of Silence, and nobody is allowed to think hard.

When a woman writes she gathers up nondescript paper, stray copybook leaves, backs of old envelopes, sharpens her pencil with the scissors, and, placing her material on an old atlas, tucks one foot under her, rocks comfortably back and forth, sucks her pencil periodically, and produces literature.

She is oblivious to Tommy, distractedly adding and subtracting in a higher key; to Mollie, beating French verbs into her brain by a succession of audible thumps and much vibrant buzzing; to Sallie, running the scales; to the cook, who demands supplies every few moments.

She makes her lovers woo, and quarrel, and marry, and the villains kill each other in the most circumscribed space.

A man demands illimitable space and annexes territory for the like deeds. He fumes and frets if the blotting-paper is not at hand. A woman "blows" the ink dry, or waves the paper in mid-air, and takes the chances for blots. He says things about ink which are enough to pale and curdle it. She rams her pen in, and about, and all round, and at last gets a "flow"; whereas, the things he has been known to affirm concerning nibs the present writer's pen refuses to record.

PROHIBITION ILLUSTRATED.—An English conjurer tells how he was performing before a rough-and-ready audience in one of the Prohibition States.

"I am now about to undertake a feat," said he, "in which I shall require the use of a pint flask of whiskey." There was a dead silence. "Will some gentleman in the audience favor me with a pint flask of whiskey?"

There was still no response, and the conjurer began to look blank.

"Surely," he said, "in a Prohibition town, I ought not to have to ask a second time for such a thing. I give you my word I will return it uninjured. Is there no——"

"Stranger," said a tall, gaunt man, as he rose slowly from a front seat, "wouldn't a quart flask do just as well?"

"Why, certainly; I merely——"

But, before he could finish, the generous, open-handed audience had risen like one man, and was on the way to the platform in a body.

MODEL LETTER WRITING.—A young man was deeply in love, but his advances were very coolly received. In despair he decided to write a letter to the young lady, expressing his deep affection for her. He was by no means brilliant, and letter after letter was torn up in disgust.

He dare not ask his friends to write for him, for he knew them to be quite capable of turning the whole matter into a joke.

At last he hit upon the plan of buying a book of letters. On the finest white paper he carefully copied out the model letter on "Declaration of love."

The girl, who was very lively, was much amused, and showed it to her friends, one of whom informed her that she had seen it before in print. The letter-book was found, to the intense delight of the cruel charmer and her friends, and the poor youth received the following crushing reply:—

"I have received your note. Turn over the leaf in your book of ready-made letters, and you will find my answer. Many thanks for saving me so much trouble in replying."

CURE FOR ROUND SHOULDERS.—A woman physician has recommended the following movements for the cure of all except very "severe cases" of round shoulders, when braces are also sometimes a necessity: (1) Raise arms before you shoulder high; extend arms sidewise; throw head back; straighten head; move arms forwards; lower arms; repeat ten times. (2) Stand erect; raise arms before you; rise on tiptoes, then throw arms as far backward as possible; sink again on heels, and drop arms to side; repeat ten times. (3) Raise arms with elbow bent, shoulder high, bringing palms together in front of face; then, with elbows still bent, swing both arms vigorously backward as far as possible, even with the shoulders, palms looking forward. This should be repeated several times, but, as the position is somewhat fatiguing, rest or change of exercise may be made between the movements.

HARD TO SATISFY.—Some persons are hard to satisfy. The thing in hand is of little worth, but the object beyond reach seems all-desirable.

A clergyman, who lives near the sea coast, narrates an occurrence which gave him a moment of disappointment, but which has also supplied him with a very good story to tell. He had planned a beautiful drive, for the benefit of a lady who was visiting his family—a lady who had never seen the ocean.

The route was chosen in such a way that not a glimpse of the sea would be had, until at a certain bend in the road, the party would come out upon a high open space, commanding a magnificent view of the broad Atlantic.

As the carriage came out upon the plateau the clergyman turned a beaming face on the lady, expecting from her an exclamation of delight; but instead of happiness on her countenance, he saw a look of longing.

"Oh," she said with a heavy sigh, "how I wish that I could see the Pacific!"

CAUGHT.—A man in Berlin who was accused of theft set up a plea of insanity, thereby hoping to escape punishment. Professor Mendel, a noted specialist, was deputed to examine the prisoner and report of the state on his mind. He found the man lying in bed. To all questions put such as how old he was, where he lived, what he was called, the prisoner invariably answered, "I don't know." Then the professor took a mark out of his purse and asked how much it was. "I don't know," the man answered, as before. The professor then asked for the prisoner's purse, out of which he took a mark, and once more the man declared that he did not know its value; whereupon Professor Mendel put a groschen into the prisoner's purse, transferring the mark to his own. "Why, doctor," said the patient hastily, "you have made a mistake!" The imposture was made bare and the impostor convicted.

IT CANNOT BE SUNK.—Experiments have recently been made on the floating capabilities of a substance composed principally of pulverized cork.

It appears that a mattress of this material, weighing about twenty-five pounds, cannot be sunk by the weight of five full-grown men, and that two or three persons might float on it in the midst of the ocean with as great security from drowning as if on board ship. Belts made of it would be invaluable.

The beds, pillows, cushions, etc., made of this material are more elastic, soft and comfortable than those of most materials.

DIDN'T WORK.—Mother: "I am sure if your husband saw that beautiful fashion plate that came with the last magazine, he would get you one of those charming costumes at once."

Daughter: "He—did—see—it."

"Did he? What did he say?"

"He said, 'what lovely faces!'"

PRINTING WITH MOVABLE TYPES.—According to the researches of Wachler, of Breslau, into the origin of literature, printing with movable types does not go farther back in China than to the tenth century of our era. According to Klayrotta, the first four books of Confucius were printed between the years 890 and 925 in the province of Szutschuen; and the student could have read a description of the Chinese manipulations as early as 1310 in Raschideddin's Persian history of the "Emperor of Cathay." Stanislas Julien, who gave great attention to Chinese antiquities, found that between 1041 and 1048, or nearly 400 years before Gutenberg, there lived a Chinese smith, Pi sching by name, who used movable types made from baked clay. His invention, however, did not come into use.

Medicine as a profession for women is less than 50 years old. Dr. Mary Zakrzewska, of Boston, has recently published an interesting account of the early struggles of the pioneers in this particular field. Harriet Hunt and Elizabeth Blackwell were stirred by the idea that an important work might be done by well-instructed medical women. The materialization resulted in complete social ostracism, impossible to be endured by any but the strongest and most courageous women. No woman doctor ever earned a living before 1860. No respectable family in any commonly respectable neighborhood would let rooms to a woman physician. Even when friends gave her shelter a business card or sign was not allowed. The lack of practical training was really the stumbling block and the cause of all this prejudice.

HOW DO THEY REMOVE BOAS?—Though the boas are not venomous, their huge size and gigantic strength cause them to be dreaded by the natives of the tropical countries in which they are found. For the same reason it is not easy to manage them in captivity. It is sometimes necessary, however, to move them from place to place, and this flitting is arranged by allowing the animals to overfeed themselves. In this state they become dull, stupid and averse from active exercise, and can be handled as if they were so many big, soft logs.

WHY A "PRIVATE" IS SO CALLED.—The origin of the word "private" when applied to a soldier in the ranks may be traced to the much earlier use of the same word as applied to civilians, "a private man or citizen"—that is, one not invested with public office or employment. The epithet being thus applied in common language to any civilian not holding office, has, by a slight extension of meaning, been used to signify soldiers not holding rank.

HER HABIT.—Mr. Fondhusband, an aged widower, was married recently for the fourth time, notwithstanding he had a house full of grown-up children.

At the marriage breakfast a guest, hearing sobs in the next room, asked one of the children what was the matter.

"It's only Emily," was the reply. "She always howls when papa gets married again."

WHAT?—"What," said the lecturer, warming to his subject—"what will unman a bright youth more, what will destroy his ambition quicker, than the calamity of being thrown overboard by the object of his worship?"

"Marrying her," piped the hen-pecked man in the rear of the hall; and the audience tittered, and even the lecturer smiled.

The amount of coal consumed in New York and Philadelphia is secured from figures compiled from the "Mineral Industries of the United States." New York city received for consumption and shipment in the year 1889, 10,253,706 tons anthracite and 4,353,436 tons of bituminous coal, and Philadelphia, 4,751,175 tons anthracite and 2,630,502 tons bituminous. These figures include all coal used by railroad companies and delivered to steam vessels at the points for their own fuel. The actual quantity consumed in New York, exclusive of shipments, were 3,300,000 tons anthracite and 1,853,436 bituminous, short tons, while Philadelphia used 3,188,004 tons anthracite and 919,187 tons bituminous.

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Humorous.

MERELY FOR GOING ON.

There's the woman with the mission, and the woman with the fad,
Who makes the chap that marries her wish that he never had;
But the most outrageous product of this freak-infested age
Is the woman with a genius for going on the stage.

—U. N. Nonx.

A striking illustration—the picture of a prize fight.

Minister: "Tommy, what is happiness?" Tommy, promptly: "It's when you're eating."

Mrs. Jones: "Don't trouble to see me to the door, Mrs. Smith." Mrs. Smith: "No trouble; quite a pleasure, I assure you."

"Say, mamma, why is it papa always speaks of money as 'cold cash?'"

"I guess because it gives him a chill to part with it."

Snodgrass: "There is one queer thing about silence." Snively: "Name it." Snodgrass: "When silence falls it is not necessarily broken."

Jones: "That mule I bought from you kicked me. You said he was safe."

Brown: "Well, so he is. I didn't say you would be, though."

What is the difference between keeping a saddle-horse and wearing tight boots?—In the former case you have to buy your corn; in the latter you grow your own.

First messenger boy: "How did you catch such a cold?"

Second messenger boy, indignantly: "I didn't catch it. Got it sitting down."

Daughter: "Well, I think Fred is a man in a thousand."

Father: "Quite so; but he thinks himself the other nine hundred and ninety-nine."

"Did you ever notice how sometimes the earth seems to smile at the sun?" said the poetic young woman. "Oh, yes," he answered. "The sun's an old flame of hers, you know."

"How long will one of these $2 watches last?"

"Oh, about three months. They are gotten up for city trade during the sandbagging season."

"Money causes all the trouble in the world!" yelled the Socialist. And the meek little man in the back row remarked that there were an awful lot of people looking for trouble.

First damsel: "But I thought he said he would never speak to you again." Second damsel: "Oh, yes; but he saw I had a cold, and he couldn't resist the temptation to tell me of a sure cure."

"Will any one tell me," shouted the prohibition orator, "who, save those engaged in this accursed traffic, gets any benefit from it?" And a voice from the audience replied: "Well, we're a paying you $50 a night."

A clergyman startled his drowsy congregation on a recent Sunday as follows: "My dearly beloved friends, permit me to remind you that I came here to preach, not to act as umpire in a sleeping match."

Biddy: "Sure the gentleman of the house is not at home, sor."

Caller: "I am sorry, for I wanted to pay him a little bill I owe him."

Biddy: "In that case, sor, I'll ask him agin."

Friend: "You took your son into your establishment some months ago to teach him the business, I understand. How did it turn out?"

Business man, wearily: "Great success. He's teaching me now."

Lady, whose young niece is about to go for a sail with some members of a rowing club: "I should like to go with you, only I am so afraid of drowning. Are the gentlemen good swimmers?"

Gentlemen, in chorus: "Oh, no; we can't swim at all."

Lady: "Then I think I'll go with you, for in that case you are sure to be careful."

"What has become of the big man who used to beat the bass drum?" the leader of a military band was asked. "Oh, he left us more than three months ago?" "Good man, wasn't he?" "Yes—first-rate; but he got so fat that, when he marched, he couldn't hit the drum in the middle."

A book agent went into a barber shop and asked the proprietor if he could sell him an encyclopædia.

"What's that?" asked the tonsorial artist.

"It is a book that contains information on every subject in the world."

Victim in the chair says feebly: "He doesn't need it."

The other day a physician was questioning a man who was thought to be insane.

"Do you ever have any illusions?" he asked.

"What are they?" asked the man.

"Why," explained the physician, "do you ever hear voices?"

"Oh, yes," replied the man.

"When?"

"Whenever some one talks to me," was the entirely sane reply.

THE PARSON AND THE PHONOGRAPH.—A story is told of a preacher who used the phonograph to aid him in his pastoral duties.

It happened that the unfortunate clergyman was overworked, having charge of two parishes—one in a large city and one in a suburban town. It occurred to him that by preaching his discourse into the phonograph on Saturday it could be "ground out" by an assistant on Sunday afternoon to the suburban congregation, relieving him of the otherwise necessary obligation of delivering two discourses.

The scheme was given a trial and proved itself satisfactory to all parties concerned—especially to the pastor, as he was left free to spend his Sunday afternoons with his family.

One Saturday morning, as the clergyman was delivering his discourse for the following day into the funnel of the phonograph, he was interrupted in the middle of the sentence, "And what did Moses say to the children of Israel?" by his wife calling out that two gentlemen were waiting to see him.

Without shutting off the current, so to speak, the clergyman said, "Tell the gentlemen to call again—I'm out," and continued his address to the instrument.

Everything went along smoothly at the suburban service the next afternoon, the congregation becoming very much interested in the discourse on Moses, until the phonograph repeated the pastor's words in a loud voice—

"And what did Moses say to the children of Israel?"

A short silence only served to make the congregation the more eager to catch the biblical answer to this question, when, to the utter surprise of all assembled, the beloved voice of their pastor chimed forth—

"Tell the gentlemen to call again—I'm out."

It is needless to say the congregation left the church in a body; and now the suburban parish has a pastor of its own.

WHY PEOPLE HAVE FRECKLES.—It is a well-known fact that red-haired individuals are more liable to become freckled than others, and science explains the phenomenon thus:—"It is caused by a superabundance of iron in the blood. This it is that imparts the vigor, the elasticity, the great vitality, the overflowing, thoroughly healthy animal life which runs riot through the veins of the ruddy-haired, and renders them more intense in all their emotions than their more languid fellow-creatures.

"The excess of iron is also the cause of freckles on the peculiarly clear, white skin, which invariably accompanies red hair. The skin being abnormally sensitive, the action of the sun's rays not only brings out the little brown spots in abundance, but also burns like a mustard plaster, producing a queer, creepy sensation, as if the skin were being wrinkled up."

"THEM'S THE RULES."—The visitor at the World's Fair at Chicago was seated at a table in one of the high-priced restaurants in the Exposition grounds, thinking of various things as he read over the bill of fare and observed the prices.

"By thunder!" he exclaimed to the waiter, "haven't you got any conscience at all in this place?"

"Beg pardon," returned the haughty servitor.

"Haven't you got any conscience—conscience—conscience—don't you understand?"

The waiter picked up the bill of fare and began looking it over.

"I don't know if we have or not," he said: "if we have, it's on the bill; if we ain't it's a extry. Them's the rules, sir."

WOMEN OF OTHER PERIODS.—In the great momentum of the woman movement, which gains new victims every day, one is induced to overlook the fact that woman was a power morally, socially, and intellectually, in the fifteenth century as well as the nineteenth; that the doors of universities were open to her, not only to study, but to teach within their sacred precincts. In the University of Salamanca she had a place, and when Isabella of Spain desired to acquire the Latin tongue it was to a woman she turned for a tutor. In Italy, even in the thirteenth century, it is recorded that a noble Florentine lady won the palm of oratory in a public contest in Florence, having to contend against learned doctors who came from all over the world.

MISS TRILL: "I love to hear the birds sing." Jack Downright (warmly): "So do I. They never attempt a piece beyond their ability."

DOLLARD & CO.,

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Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEES.

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MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 29, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

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